

**REDISCOVERING  
THE GOOD STUFF**

—  
**A CASE STUDY  
ON THE DESIGN  
STRATEGIES  
OF HERITAGE  
FASHION BRANDS**

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FASHION BRANDS

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CLOTHING DESIGN

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# REDISCOVERING THE GOOD STUFF

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## A CASE STUDY ON THE DESIGN STRATEGIES OF HERITAGE FASHION BRANDS

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IMAGE 1  
Vogue editorial shot  
in heritage style



IMAGE 2  
Heritage  
street style

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*I became interested in Heritage brands when I read an article in the Wall Street Journal about nostalgia recycling and how the Japanese adopt foreign cultures and interpret them better than the originals. (Downey, 2012) The article quotes the owner of a vintage store on how he creates “enhanced” versions of vintage American wardrobe and sells them in his shop in the Amerikura area of Osaka that is a magnet for U.S. fashion and youth culture. According to this article there had been a movement building up for the past few decades around these heirloom brands, designing and selling remade Americana style. (Downey, 2012) To the Japanese enthusiasts, this remade Americana is a purist vision of what Americana was (Carpenter, 2012). This article opened my eyes to the heritage fashion phenomenon. The phenomenon appears to reminisce about the times when clothes had functionality, when clothes were purposeful and somehow more authentic. This longing for nostalgia has made archive material a profitable path for many fashion brands. An interesting side effect of reviving these brands is how they have surfaced in a new context with their contemporized styles.*



IMAGE 3  
Heritage  
prep style

INTRODUCTION

Heritage fashion brands have become a distinguishable part of fashion in the past few years. It seems that due to times of economic uncertainty, designers have found comfort in tradition and many brands have looked back on their own heritage and used it as a source of inspiration. Many of these heritage fashion companies have a history with work wear or otherwise purposeful clothes. The interest in these brands has caused quality and craftsmanship to become more desirable brand assets and a means for brand revival. Consumers have also grown interested in brands with history. It is probable that this growth of interest has triggered the emergence of heritage collections and developed them into a phenomenon. At the core of this phenomenon are a few strong brands with long histories in quality apparel originally designed for purposes other than fashion: such as Levis, L.L Bean and Belstaff (Cloudsdale;Grandi;Parrot;Roe;Watts;& Willms, 2013). Consumers attentive to contemporary lifestyles have found these brands especially interesting and many of these heritage brands have leveraged this interest as fast as possible by adding a heritage line to their brand. (Moore, 2013)

The goal of this master’s thesis is to explore the branding and design of heritage fashion brands that seem to be at the core of the heritage fashion phenomenon and to analyze how fashion brands can best implement this kind of history utilization in their design and branding work. In addition to spotting different strategies, I implement the findings of the case analysis on an interpretation of a concept collection for Finnish clothing company R-collection.

Like many consumers and designers, I find heritage brands comforting. These brands make me feel nostalgic and they accentuate the *better* slower pace times. I sense these brands are giving us something from the past that we did not even realize was missing, making these brands worth the exploration. In fact, the popularity of the heritage look has nudged many companies to invent a heritage for their brand, so that the brand would sound more reliable and authentic. (Urde;Greyser;& Balmer, 2007) It seems the term “heritage” has been used very generously, in the same way as the word *organic* in food products. However, in this thesis I concentrate on fashion brands that are known to have a historic connection: such as Woolrich Woolen Mills, Pendleton and Carhartt WIP, Gitman Vintage, Red Wing shoes and S.N.S Herning.

The phenomenon of heritage fashion is very inspiring because it promotes long lasting quality apparel. For a fashion designer, understanding heritage fashion brands can teach about harnessing existing brand histories and concepts. It can also reveal what could be done strategically to successfully differentiate brands and to achieve higher positioning among competitors. Ultimately, analyzing these old brands that have successfully become contemporary and current might present modern day fashion companies with new ideas on how to adapt or reconfigure their existing resources and capabilities.

Although this thesis mainly explores how the *good* of the past can be contemporized with design strategies and reinterpreted for the modern day, it also helps us recognize the conjoint efforts of design and branding activities and their effects on brand success.

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## 1 . STUDY PREMISES

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This thesis explores heritage fashion brands that have made a successful category change by shifting the brand image from functional or traditional to more contemporary fashion. The shifting has given the collections a fashion classification and turned the brand into a symbolic brand . Using six heritage brands for my case analysis, I distinguish the different strategy options on how to successfully leverage a brand in this way. The chosen case brands have somewhat similar histories and are these days identified as heritage fashion brands. The brands I look into are principally manifested in street fashion and menswear. An interesting common denominator is how similarly these brands have used their own history for new product development and brand renewal. However, the type of heritage this thesis explores is not simply brands that have histories or brands with retro marketing campaigns. Instead Urde et al. (2007) define the kind of heritage brands that this thesis focuses on quite accurately: *All brands have a history. Some brands have a heritage. And a few have made their heritage a valuable corporate asset. For some that value remains hidden. Finding (in the sense of understanding) the heritage in a brand may well be a path to unlocking its value for the company by enabling the brand's past and present to strengthen its future.* (Urde;Greyser;& Balmer, 2007, p. 8)

<sup>1</sup> Symbolic brands satisfy symbolic needs such as those for self-expression and prestige, and their practical usage is only incidental. (Reddy, 1998, p.32)



The objective of this thesis is to articulate different strategy options for how a fashion brand can use its legacy. The research questions of this thesis are: **What are the most common design and branding strategies when leveraging a fashion brand with history?**

**Which branding and design strategies appear most relevant to heritage fashion brands? And what is the interrelation of different strategies in heritage fashion?**

I explore heritage brands and their branding and designing strategies from two perspectives. Firstly, I analyze six case brands using images of their products, brand websites and online articles. The role of this analysis is to demonstrate how these brands have leveraged their own heritage in new product development and brand rekindling. In the analysis I try to discover whether there are similarities and differences among the chosen companies and especially if there are resemblances or patterns in the branding strategies from the viewpoint of design. Secondly I compare the case companies to the literature on leveraging a brand to discover if they conflict or support with the literature on extensions. I also synthesize concrete strategies found on the basis of the literature review and case analysis and I give suggestions for Finnish company R-Collection that fits the profile of a heritage brand. The suggestions are about which design strategies would work best if the company were to attempt to extend the brand with a brand or a line extension. In addition, I will also design a small concept collection of womenswear to exemplify my case study results. By doing this, I hope to give a concrete example of how a brand can energize its offering. The collection is based on R-collection’s iconic looks from their own design archives and my personal inspiration. The idea of the concept collection is to test possible future styles on known brand looks. The brand R- collection has a similar brand story as many of the heritage fashion companies that I have looked into. The company is also currently going through an image renewal process, which makes it a suitable “test” brand for this thesis to demonstrate some of the thesis findings.

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RESEARCH  
OBJECTIVES

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STRUCTURES  
AND  
OUTLINE

The thesis is divided into two parts. The first part of the thesis is research and case studies. The research is the main part of my thesis and it consists of literature review into previous research and theories to build a comprehensible framework around my research questions and six case studies. The literature review is also compared and contrasted throughout my thesis with emerging data from the case study.

The second part of my thesis is where I apply the knowledge I gain from the literature review and case study on a collection based on R-collection archives. This part of the thesis is reflective of the research segment of my thesis and it is built to round up a wholesome image of how design plays an important role when a brand does a heritage extension. It also demonstrates how design is in sync with all the other branding actions.

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PREVIOUS  
RESEARCH  
ON BRAND  
LEVERAGING

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When talking about leveraging brand history and fashion brands, it is essential to determine what seems to constitute a heritage fashion brand. Heritage brands in general can be talked about as established brands, iconic brands, or brands with legacy. These terms seem to be used to describe and emphasize brands with symbolic identities that are somehow meaningful in a cultural context. These synonyms for heritage brands go well with fashion brands, but there are also other characteristics that seem to describe these brands quite well. It appears that many of these heritage fashion brands are also brand extensions, line extensions or results of co-brandings. In addition, they usually express their brand heritage in the form of a brand story enhanced by means of advertising.

The interest of this thesis lies in *how design and design strategies* can affect the success of a line or brand extension with positive brand associations and consumer evaluations of the extension. The literature review is consequently an answer to questions why and how. The literature on how to manage an extension specifically is not included, but I am exploring the role of design, because it is relevant to the work of a fashion designer. In addition the literature review looks into strategic styling, fit and consumer perceptions of the two. All of these mentioned areas are important factors when exploring brands with new lines or extensions. Nostalgia and retro branding in advertising and other promotional activities as means for strategic brand renewal are also addressed. Advertising and viral marketing seem to be much used with heritage brands, which is why I explore these entities as well. The literature review explores multiple concepts because it seems the success of a brand is usually a combination of different design and branding strategies. The literature review should give a representation of the elements that go into a successful brand or line extension. Ultimately, the findings of this literature review will support the case analysis process.

Some readers might want to see the new collections by heritage fashion brands as line extension, but in most cases the heritage brand has based its new fashionable and more contemporarily designed products on items designed for a different category of clothing. Especially if the new collection is based on work wear or otherwise purposefully designed clothes. Therefore in the cases where there is a clear change from functional wear to fashion I describe the extension as a brand extension. However, there are cases where the category change is not as clear, and in these cases I am aware that the extension is a line extension. This is also why the literature review looks more into brand extensions in terms of fit and design.

The literature on leveraging the assets of an existing brand is looked into from a perspective that is most relevant with the case analysis in chapter five. I hope to find clarifying ways to look at these case brands and also some tools for categorizing different areas of my thesis. I also expect to reinforce some of my hypothesis about these heritage fashion brands.

When looking at the heritage fashion phenomenon most of these brands seem to have gone with the strategy of extending the original brand. There appear to be sub-brands, new collections or lines and even category changes. Kotler and Keller (2009) explain brand extension as follows: When a brand uses an established brand to introduce a new product, the product is called a brand extension. Stewart and Martin (2001) clarify that extending brands to new products and new product categories, has been a common practice that marketers use to obtain returns by leveraging existing awareness, positive affect and purchase intention associated with a well-known brand. In fashion, the defining of a new product can be tricky. Kapferer (2008) suggests brand extensions can be seen as leaps out of the known category to grow the business. (Kapferer, 2008). In fashion this could for example be a change from apparel to accessories or a more fundamental change like the usage situation of clothes. Kapferer (2008) points out, that extensions cannot be made in all directions. The direction is defined by the brand itself. Kapferer (2008) describes, that a brand works as a genetic program. It carries the code of the future products, which will bear its name. It could be assumed, that the reasons behind fashion brands extending their offering are similar in most cases. The business might be looking to grow, a certain style has become more fashionable or the company sees potential in new designs. Katherine Best (2006) specifies that identified and unmet customer needs can act as a starting point for a brand extension. Also, design driven companies may design solutions around needs and desires of their customers and often this new branded offering is turned into a brand extension of the established brand. (Best, 2006)

Two main advantages of brand extensions are that they can facilitate new product acceptance and provide positive feed back to the parent brand and company. (Kotler & Keller, 2009) Brand extensions are especially common in the luxury goods sector. For example many luxury brands originating in haute couture have later extended to accessories. Luxury product brands often find the inspiration for their extensions from within their own history, such as fancy leather goods, jewelry, watch-making, even table wear and cosmetics. (Kapferer, 2008) A brand extension is generally tied to a new product launch and unlike line extensions, brand extension lead the brand into new and unknown markets, which may be dominated by strong competitors. (Kapferer, 2008) Brand extensions are attractive to firms. They provide a way to leverage brand name recognition and image to enter new markets. A strong brand name reduces the risk of introducing a completely new product in the market and it provides consumers with knowledge and familiarity of the established brand. (Aaker & Keller, 1990) Aaker (1996) introduces the downside of brand name association. Aaker (1996) tells a retail example of how brand associations can be risky. The American fashion retail brand Gap faced many competitors in 1993 targeting value-conscious customers by offering similar fashions as Gap, but with lower prices. To compete against these challengers Gap opened its own warehouse style outlets called Gap Warehouse. The problem with these outlets however, was that they were too alike to what was sold at the Gap. As a result the name of the lower priced outlet was changed to Old Navy Clothing co and the association with brand name Gap faded over time. (Aaker A. D., 1996)

As mentioned earlier, when a fashion brand does an extension it is most probably a line extension. For example subtle changes like Fjällräven’s new backpack colors or sizes can be seen as line extensions. A line extension is a new version of the product within the same product class. New sizes and new packaging are examples of line extensions. A line extension can provide variety, expand user base and energize the brand. Aaker (1996) explains that brand-loyal customers may see a brand as serving their specific needs and a line extension can expand this appeal by creating different versions of that need. Expanding this appeal provides variety within the brand without having to switch to another brand. (Aaker A. D., 1996) A brand can become more energized and relevant to consumers through a line extension. This can add brand visibility and stimulate sales, which will then again strengthen brand equity. (Aaker A. D., 1996)

Line extensions provide a channel for product innovations that can be beneficial for gaining competitive advantage. These new product innovations can create differentiation by adding more variety. They can also enhance a brand’s value proposition, expand usage contexts, and block competitors. These extensions can also provide an outlet for

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BRAND  
AND  
LINE  
EXTENSIONS

IMAGE 4  
Kånken backpacks  
by Fjällräven.



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innovation within a brand management organization (Aaker A. D., 1996). Line extension are very common in the fashion business, for example many high end fashion brands have started a more affordable retail line on the wing of a luxury brand. Basically, consumers buy the luxury image and the brand name, but at a cheaper price. This kind of strategizing brings previously untapped customers into the revenue stream, without harming the original product line. (Hernandez, 2013)

In addition to different line and brand extensions, it appears there are also a number of concept collections created in fashion to test the waters and to see what kind of approach these extensions should be going with. For example Levi's did a twist on their Levi's Red premium collection called Levi's Lined Red. The collection references Levi's archival garments and interprets nearly every element. The loose and rounded fits are based on early Levi's jeans patterns from the 1870's and 1880's, when 'waist overalls' were worn as protective outer layers by workingmen of the American West (ln—cc.com, 2014). Many of the details such as the pocket scoops and back pocket shapes also come from Levi Strauss and Co.'s Duck and Denim styles from 1873 and 1874. The result is a collection of radically constructed denim clothing for the future in unisex style. (Poveda, 2014)

IMAGE 5  
Levi's Lined Red unisex  
experimental line



One of the first things I noticed when observing heritage fashion brands were the number of collaborations they seemed to have done. It appears that collaborating has become very popular in all fields of design and many companies have detected the potential in offering fusions of two brands. In fact Aaker (1996) explains that entering another product class by co-branding is also a way to leverage a brand. In addition, Bouten’s (2010) doctoral thesis on co-branding and new product development aims to improve our understanding of consumer evaluations of co-branded products by taking the newly designed products into the equation. The writer states that co-branding can for example be effective for a brand that cannot develop a new product by itself. Bouten’s (2010) studies also reveal that there are different strategic reasons for using the co-branding strategy. These reasons have changed in accordance to changes in society and brand management (Bouten, 2010). In the past, co –branding was used to reduce perceptions of risk with regard to new products and brands by collaborating with a trusted and established brand. However, Bouten (2010) states that gradually co- branding has become the means to help build a brand’s image through the transfer of associations between the partner brands. Finally co-branding helps to create relevant consumer experiences in which emotional bonds became more important. (Bouten, 2010) Later on in this literature review I will look into how consumers experience these results of co-brandings and different extension. This topic of collaboration is also very significant to the case study of heritage fashion brands, because it seems the heritage phenomenon has brought along many intriguing collaborations.

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CO-BRANDING  
IN  
FASHION

These collaborations between heritage companies seem to fit the idea that these conjoint product releases are often done for image building reasons. In fact, changing a fashion brands image seems to be a very popular approach when looking at recent brand collaborations. An online trend report suggests that companies seem to want to team up with companies that are better versed in the norms of a given group to avoid misfortunes. (Scharf, 2013) An example of changing up a brands perceived image would be when heritage brand Levi’s teamed up with MOCA (The Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles) to add interest and rebellious flavor to the brand’s offerings. Jackets embellished with work by famous street artists were a fruit of this collaboration. Through this collaboration Levi’s was able to convey a more artistic, grassroots image and MOCA got more exposure to those outside of Los Angeles. (Scharf, 2013) It seems that switching up companies goods and services tends to draw attention in any case and double the exposure. Brand collaborations can be hugely advantageous for brands, so long as the project serves the needs of both companies involved. It is also notable, that in the past collaborations were done to reduce risk when stepping to a new market or testing a product, but it seems that these days the collaborations are done more as ways to energize the original brand offering.

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IMAGE 6  
HUMMEL J-  
A collaboration  
between Danish  
sportswear brand  
Hummel and Japanese  
Designer Ryo Yoshihashi



IMAGE 7  
Nike  
x  
Riccardo Tisci

The role of fit in extensions seems to be highly emphasized in previous brand leveraging theories. Whether a product is a brand extension, a line extension or a result of collaboration it all boils down to brands playing with different types of fit. Fit in a brand extension case would mean that the new products are a logical continuum of the original brands products. A line extension needs to make sense in connection to the earlier lines and collaboration needs to have some coherent reminders from both collaborating parties.

For most brand extensions, a motivating rational is that the original brand has associations that will be helpful to the extension (Aaker & Keller, 1990, p. 28). The success of the new category is influenced by perceptions on overall quality of the original brand, perceptions of the fit between the original and the new product class, as well as attribute and attitude associations that the original brand might convey. (Aaker & Keller, 1990) Whether a consumer perceives the new item to be consistent with the parent brand is a key element in predicting brand extension success. A lack of fit between the existing products of a brand and the new product can lead consumers to the conclusion that the extension is meaningless. (Aaker & Keller, 1990) (Bouten, 2010) If the brand has a strong heritage and, in particular, if the brand has already nurtured a recognizable design identity throughout earlier product generations, there may be a greater need for consistency in the brand portfolio and also a greater potential to create consistency by referring to iconic designs from the brand's past (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010, p. 19). Brand heritage is perceived as using marketing-mix variables that invoke the history of a particular brand, including all its personal and cultural associations (Brown;Kozintez;& Sherry, 2003, s. 20). When the fit is high, consumers are hypothesized to accept the extension concept and not activate thought processes challenging the quality and characteristics of the extension. (Aaker & Keller, 1990)

Therefore in terms of fit, the design of a product extension is crucial when communicating brand values. Identifying a product as a member of a brand is dependent on visual appearance carrying associations of its own. Here the brand message is composed of a number of design features that embody the core brand values. (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010)



**IMAGE 8**  
Peddy Marquis re-imagines  
everyday objects  
repackaged by  
expensive designer brands

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BRAND  
FIT

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# 1

## FIT SIMILARITY MEASURES

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Perceived similarity is mentioned frequently in the literature about brand fit. Perceived similarity also known as perceived fit is a two dimensional notion. The first dimension is product category fit, which refers to the perceived similarity between the extension category and the existing product categories of the parent brand. (Czellar, 2003) The product category in which the brand operates creates specific requirements for the management of a visual identity (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010, p. 16). The second is brand level fit, referring to the match between the specific image of the brand and the extension product category. (Czellar, 2003) Steward and Martin (2001) discuss different ways to measure product similarity and offer four general approaches that have been proposed in the context of brand extension research. All four are grounded on theoretical foundations in cognitive psychology. Each of these measures suggests that an extension facilitates the transfer of knowledge, attitude and purchase intention. (Steward & Martin, 2001)

The first measure according to Stewart and Martin (2001) is feature-based similarity. Feature based similarity offers a look into product characteristics that are tangible. Feature based similarities have been hypothesized to transfer associations and affect from a core brand to a brand extension. Similarity of features is speculated to play an important role in how consumers evaluate fit between a brand and the extension of the brand. Measuring feature-based similarity is done by comparing tangible features and other measures like similarity of the manufacturing process across product categories. This method is however limited, because in some cases the physical features across product categories are not comparable. (Stewart & Martin, 2001)

Usage occasion may provide a more robust and theoretically meaningful measure of similarity than feature-based similarity. This is because the similarity or dissimilarity of product features may have a little to do with how consumers perceive the occasion on which a product might be used or the way in which product usage takes place. Even if products have different physical forms the attitudes or the knowledge connected to the products may transfer from one product to another. This is likely to happen with complementary products like Kodak cameras and Kodak film. (Steward & Martin, 2001)

Brand schemas and concept consistencies is the authors third way of measuring product similarity. Steward and Martin (2001) suggest that products may share a concept or schema. A coherent concept meaning the way people categorize objects into different “classes” and schema is something that people are speculated to sense about how and why products fit together apart from any feature-based similarity or dissimilarity. This holistic approach offers a more general framework that includes common usage occasion, feature similarity and the benefits associated with a brand as a way of relating two products. For example a product may be perceived as similar on the basis of having a more utilitarian image; meaning that even if products share only a few features they can still be perceived as similar because of a shared image. This third approach is also imperfect, because there is no basis identifying brand concept similarity. However this approach has some appeal as a descriptive tool. (Steward & Martin, 2001)

The fourth approach is goal-based similarity, which is the most indirect transfer process for connotations. This approach means that products have a certain set of associations in tact, which are organized, around mutual goals. These products offer a fulfillment of a goal that is made available when acquiring a product with certain abstract or concrete features. In fashion this would mean you gain a certain image from certain fashions. In other words, the various similarity measures are related to the extent that they are made coherent by common goals. These goals provide a framework, which determines which product features and abstract benefits are shared across product categories. (Steward & Martin, 2001) Steward and Martin (2001) also introduce a separate goal derived categorization theory, which is made up of several specific measures. The key measure here is Goal congruency, meaning how similar these goals are. Another measure is how well the product is perceived to achieve a certain goal and the third is the similarity of ideals, which involves critical attributes on which consumers base the similarity of a product and its capabilities in achieving a certain goal. For example feature-based measures such as bright colors, soft leather or manufacturing ability, which is related to the ability or expertise the brand must possess to produce various types of products. Features like the



stitching on clothing or shoes are a manufacturing ability. (Steward & Martin, 2001) The interesting part about this theory is, that in cases where the goals are not similar as in incongruent, consumers may respond differently to measures of product similarity. In the absence of congruent goals consumer may use whatever information is available to create ad hoc categories when confronted with a similarity-rating task (Steward & Martin, 2001). This means that these goals work as kind of a context that helps consumers make decisions about products. In fact when these goals are highly noticeable, they provide a context that acts as an organizing framework or a guide to processing, similarity judgments, and decision-making. This framework is also the setting within which similarity is judged between a proposed extension and the existing object. Therefore extremely incongruent extension will be perceived as so different from the core brand that it might weaken the identity of the core brand. (Steward & Martin, 2001)

Aaker and Keller (1990) also have a view on perceiving fit. The writers introduce three dimensions of fit to exemplify different measures to perceive fit. I looked into these measures, from a dress shoe company’s perspective, in order to bridge these measures to fashion. The first measure is **COMPLEMENT**; it indicates the extent to which consumers view two product classes as complements of each other. Products are seen as complements if both are consumed jointly to satisfy some particular need. (Aaker & Keller, 1990) For example if the dress shoe company would add a shoeshine product to their product portfolio. The second fit measure is **SUBSTITUTE**; this again is the extent to which consumers view two product classes as substitutes. One product class tends to replace the other in usage and satisfy the same needs. For example, if the dress shoe company would offer the same type of shoes for same type of usage occasion, but from cheaper materials and with a cheaper price. The third measure is **TRANSFER**; it means how consumers perceive the relationships in product manufacturing. Basically it means the capabilities of any firm in product class to manufacture a product in another product class. (Aaker & Keller, 1990) Here, the consumers would judge the dress shoe company’s capabilities to

IMAGE 9  
Fit measures based on  
Stewart and Martin (2001)

FIT MEASURES BASED ON STEWART AND MARTIN (2001)



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FIT MEASURES BASED ON AAKER AND KELLER (1990)

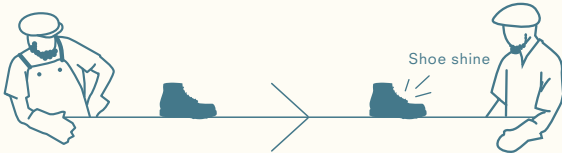
1. COMPLEMENT



2. SUBSTITUTE



3. TRANSFER



4. DIFFICULTY



produce the shoeshine. The writers also suggest a fourth measure **DIFFICULTY**; meaning the level of difficulty that consumers perceive a firm will face to achieve the extension product. The level of **DIFFICULTY** is low, when the extended product is seen as easy to make. When the level is low the extension could be rejected for being inconsistent. This is because the quality of the core brand and the trivial product class may be perceived as incongruent. (Aaker & Keller, 1990)

Another way that Aaker and Keller (1990) suggest consumers perceive product fit is through a categorization theory. categorizing theory: 1) piecemeal processing, whereby an extension evaluation is a function of supposed brand attribute beliefs and their evaluative importance, or 2) by category based processing, whereby an extension evaluation is a function of some overall attitude toward the original brand. (Aaker & Keller, 1990) The associations will “transfer” to the new product context depending on the strength of the set of associations and whether cues are present to activate an association. An example of an extension where these cues are present is Caterpillar- formerly known as a tractor brand. Caterpillar extended to clothes and shoes market aimed at the youth. The extension was intended to increase the share value by giving more visibility to the brand name, beyond the trade circles in which it had previously been known. Caterpillar clothes and shoes were able to express the exact values for which the caterpillar was known: tough work, reliability, security and so on. (Kapferer, 2008) The brand values are therefore communicated also in the design of its products, for example the sturdy color scheme and the logo signal that the products perform well in tough situations. (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010)

When the extension is a result of co-branding, it seems both brands make a difference. One of Bouten’s (2010) main study themes is how consumers perceive and evaluate co-branded products. She learned that by examining the consumers’ perception of the connection between each individual brand and the new product managers could better understand why consumers may consider the connection between one brand and the new co-branded product to make more sense. When it becomes clear what elements determine this possible brand dominance and what the consequences are of this dominance with regard to product evaluation, managers may act upon it. (Bouten, 2010) With this Bouten suggests that in co-branded products one brand can be more dominant than the other and this may have an effect on the overall perceiving of the fusion products.

Czellar (2003) has also explored brand fit and consumer evaluations. Czellar’s theory is quite similar to the previously explored fit measures, but it emphasizes how foreseeing consumer perceptions can be used as a strategic tool in the retail business. Czellar suggests an integrative model of qualifications and consequences of brand extension attitude based on the dominant cognitive paradigm. The four suggested processes are perception of fit, the formation of primary brand extension toward the extension, the link between extension attitude and marketplace behavior and the mutual effect of brand extension attitude on parent brand and extension category attitude. (Czellar, 2003) Czellar (2003) explains that brand extension attitude formation leads to concrete consumer behavior in the marketplace in terms of intentions, choice and repeat purchase. This would mean, that foreseeing how consumers perceive brand fit could be very helpful for fashion companies.

When the extension is a result of co-branding, it seems both brands make a difference. One of Bouten’s (2010) main study themes is how consumers perceive and evaluate co-branded products. She learned that by examining the consumers’ perception of the connection between each individual brand and the new product managers could better understand why consumers may consider the connection between one brand and the new co-branded product to make more sense. When it becomes clear what elements determine this possible brand dominance and what the consequences are of this dominance with regard to product evaluation, managers may act upon it. (Bouten, 2010) With this Bouten (2010) suggests that in co-branded products one brand can be more dominant than the other and this may have an effect on the overall perceiving of the fusion products.

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HERITAGE  
FASHION  
BRAND  
IMAGE  
RENEWAL

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Image renewal is essential to most brands, but a brand shouldn’t lose its meaning while doing so. In some instances marketers use a brand’s real history and heritage to reinforce positive associations, because the brands early roots add sincerity and differentiation. There are also cases where the marketers create and augment fictitious heritage to add meaning to the brand. (Merchant & Rose, 2012) Image renewal is in many ways overlapping with brand fit, because as mentioned earlier the renewal needs to have meaningful associations and it should make sense.

In the book Fashion Brands, branding from A to Z; Turngate (2004) talks about fashion brands that have done successful turnarounds with some image renewing. He gives examples like Burberry and Gucci from the more luxury categories and states that these revamped companies went through image renewing and were therefore able to get back to the market. Turngate (2004) also discusses Scottish heritage company Pringle, which was founded in 1815. Pringle is known as one of the first knitwear manufacturers in the world. This knitwear company was close to bankruptcy in the beginning of the year 2000, but was then bought by a millionaire Kenneth Fang from Hong Kong. From there on the company started to build on its own attributes of Scottish roots. There were new advertising campaigns with ‘sweater girls’ that were iconic to the brand in the 1950’s and 1960’s, but these advertisements had a trendy British model Sophie Dahl as the modern day sweater girl. This way the core of the brand was kept in tact, but the image was contemporized with a modern girl. The company also used celebrities known for their Scottish background to facelift the company to contemporary glamour. In addition to advertising and image rebuilding the designer mindsets were also updated towards hip and youthful. (Turngate, 2004)

Burberry is also an example in an article by Lindstrom (2006) about emphasizing a brand’s past. He notes that Burberry’s comeback did not happen by chance, but it was the result of well-calculated review of the brand’s and its customers’ pasts. (Lindstrom, 2006) Burberry has accumulated the effect of product consistency over a period of 160 years and in the consumer’s mind this collection of links can be seen as synonyms with the brand. All brand elements such as recognizable styling and consistent materials contribute to the brands total image. Lindstrom points out that Burberry is well plugged into its heritage and is building on this brand equity. (Lindstrom, 2006) It seems that the failing to manage this consistency was the very downfall of the brand. In fact, the Burberry example shows that especially with symbolic fashion brands it appears the meaning of consistency is vital for brand success. These different examples of fashion brand revitalizing strengthen the notion in my thesis that when contemporizing heritage brands, it is important to do it without sacrificing the main product offering and by nurturing design consistency.



Evoking feelings from a time period that a consumer has not lived him or herself has become instrumental in building consumers brand heritage perceptions. Nostalgic advertising can precipitate consumer longing for their lived past or arouse emotional feelings for a time period before the consumer’s birth. Marketers use a brand’s real history and heritage to reinforce positive associations, because the brands early roots add sincerity and differentiation. (Merchant & Rose, 2012)

Merchant and Rose (2012) tested the affect of nostalgic advertising and learned that advertising-evoked vicarious nostalgia is instrumental in building consumers’ brand heritage perceptions. (Merchant & Rose, 2012) Vicarious nostalgia is longing for a lived past outside the individuals own living memory, where as personal nostalgia is longing for the lived past. Vicarious nostalgia is also known as historical nostalgia and is often connected to fantasies and associations about past eras. Companies often use vicarious nostalgia to build, detail and reinforce the heritage of the advertised brand. (Merchant & Rose, 2012)

Since nostalgia includes visualizing or recollecting the past, the more inclined the consumer is toward nostalgia the bigger the appetite will be. This relationship is particularly important in the context of vicarious nostalgia, which involves the imagining of a mythical but not lived past. This nostalgia proneness plays an important role in shaping consumption preferences across products. It can have positive affects of product quality, feelings towards the brand and brand image in general. (Merchant & Rose, 2012)

In addition to emphasizing heritage, advertising can also help the connection of an extension (heritage brand) and the core brand (original brand). Gierl and Huettl (2011) have done research on conjunctive cues on brand extension evaluation. Conjunctive cues are basically hints that connect two things to another. According to Gierl and Huettl conjunctive cues are means to influence perceived similarity even when a natural similarity does not exist (Gierl & Huettl, 2011). Gierl and Huettl (2011) discuss the use of these cues in advertising and the affects of these cues related to brand-attitude-transfer model. They give an example of Camel, and how the brand known for cigarettes ventured into highly different category of shoes and boots. In the case of Camel, the supplier benefitted from a conjunctive cue. Camel was famous for its slogan: “I’d walk a mile for a Camel.” In a case like this, the knowledge of the conjunctive cue prevailed helpful. (Gierl & Huettl, 2011) The writers suggest that feature matching can be regarded as a process of biased hypothesis testing, which is initiated by the common brand name and additionally stimulated by the presence of a common peripheral advertising cue (Gierl & Huettl, 2011). This would mean, that the presence of this type of conjunctive cue in advertising might increase the number of recognized commonalities without increasing the number of identified differences. This could result in higher similarity between the core product and the extension. (Gierl & Huettl, 2011)

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ROLE OF ADVERTISING IN HERITAGE BRANDS	THE HERITAGE BRAND MYTH
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Brown, Kozintes and Sherry (2003) suggest that the speed of new product launches and the increasingly unstable cultural environment are important triggers of the rise of retro branding. Furthermore they state that the brands, which are best suited for revival, are the ones that have existed as important icons during a specific developmental stage for a particular generation or group. This is because the brand should be capable of evoking vivid yet relevant associations for particular consumers. The brand should also be capable of stimulating longing for an idealized past or community. Ideally the brand should be flexible to both technological and symbolic updates to ensure that consumers find the brand relevant in their constantly revised lives. (Brown;Kozintes;& Sherry, 2003)

Holt and Cameron (2012) discuss myths as branding strategies in the book Cultural Strategy. They look into branding myths from a slightly different angle than Brown, Kozintes and Sherry (2003). The authors discuss that cultural innovation is about locating a specific historic opportunity and then responding to this opportunity with specific cultural content. Cultural strategy must be tailored to these more specific historical and contextual goals (Holt & Cameron, 2012).

Nike is showcased in the book as an example of a sports brand that used myths to penetrate into the lives of American consumers by taking the visions of competing far further than sports. The myths were empowering and struck a cord with some not so well off people and showed light on to the insurmountable struggles that people face in their everyday lives. These cultural codes were tied to performance and sports, but drew from people facing social barriers and discrimination, making Nike into the brand that performs better. (Holt & Cameron, 2012) Much like these heritage fashion brands, Holt and Cameron (2012) also discuss the myth of Jack Daniels whiskey that was built on the brands own history. Demonstrating its own workers, its locale and production process as something never changing in a rustic advertising campaign. This myth defined Jack Daniels as authentic and credible, tapping into consumers need for brand transparency and knowledge of origin. (Holt & Cameron, 2012) Urde et al. (2007) see that mythmaking is relevant to heritage brands but not a vital component for building and sustaining a heritage brand and draw a line between heritage brands and iconic brands. (Urde;Greyser;& Balmer, 2007)

Heritage brands seem to have a certain status and this is kept going with help of brand stories. These stories are kept intact with advertising and some companies have these stories attached to every entity of the brand. In the light of my thesis, this chapter is very significant, because it reveals how brands color their history. Not to dismiss their actual histories, it appears to really be a competition of who colors the best.



IMAGE 11  
American Airlines  
'heritage' advertisement



IMAGE 12  
Just A T-Shirt  
Nike Ad. Photograph  
by Terry Richardson

# 4

## 4 . BRAND RENEWAL THROUGH DESIGN

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In chapters 2 and 3 I looked into previous research on branding activities on a general level. In this chapter I introduce previous research on the interrelation of branding and design and look into the role of design more specifically. Chapters 4 and 4.1 underline the meaning of design in the contemporizing of heritage brands and are therefore key chapters in my thesis.

Ravasi and Lojacono (2005) explain that growing relevance of design may be explained by the increasing role of culture and lifestyles in consumers’ decisions. Clothing, transportation, food and beverages, home furnishings, personal accessories and even consumer electronics and sports have become means for expressing a lifestyle. Companies are increasingly facing the need to develop products that are not just efficient or reliable, but also responsive to emerging lifestyles and cultural values. (Ravasi & Lojacono, 2005)

Building on this, Ravasi and Lojacono (2005) introduce a way to look at design in brand renewal. They discuss the risk of disagreement between designers and the market, in cases where design becomes a fundamental element of differentiation and a source of competitive advantage for the company. As societal values and demography evolve, new lifestyles and patterns of use emerge. New technologies and intense competition tend to increase the available opportunities of production and consumption. Ravasi and Lojacono (2005) have analyzed companies with strong emphasis on design and looked more closely at the strategic role of design.

Ravasi and Lojacono divide the renewal process into two phases: the first phase being the exploration of new applications for available resources and capabilities and generating new ideas. The authors discuss how to manage these renewals, but more relevant in the case of these heritage brands and my thesis is to look at the role of the designer in the renewal process. The design driven renewal in the first phase should be periodical and continuously resulting in extensions of product lines and features. These proposals should be based on a ‘design philosophy’- to help with orientation and stimulation of the new product or concept development. However, wild ideas should be encouraged and occasional departing from the established principals should be allowed.

The second phase means the evaluation of the presented proposals by the management. The actual involvement of managers in this phase may vary, but usually this means approving or rejecting the designer’s proposals when reflecting their success with the expected costs and revenues, as well as the overall fit with the existing product lines and organizational features. (Ravasi & Lojacono, 2005) These two phases commonly occur gradually and within the boundaries of current strategy and design philosophy. Sometimes more prominent variations of existing concepts and principles may be introduced in product design. Organizational development and changes in the strategic course of the organization may occur if receiving positive feedback from these more elaborate new products. This meaning a positive change resonating from design level all the way to the organizational level and this wave of change resulting in managers and designers having to question their beliefs about market segmentation, user needs and cultural values. Finally this variation of thinking on a designer level can result in a new way of thinking for the whole company in a strategic sense. (Ravasi & Lojacono, 2005) With this in mind, the writers underline that while using design or styling to stimulate demand or sustain exports is not new to companies, promoting design-driven renewal means recognizing that design is not simply a matter of enhancing functionality or styling. Design is a powerful symbolic medium for expressing or reinforcing a unique set of meanings embodied in a brand (Ravasi & Lojacono, 2005, p. 19). The writers highlight the importance of going back to the roots, finding the core of the brand and using design to adduce and reinforce the heart of the brand.

In the previous chapter I explained design as a form of renewal with the help of authors Ravasi and Lojacono. Ravasi and Lojacono presented the renewal process as two phased. The phases were seen as a somewhat joint effort of designers and company management. The overall process of renewal with the help of design was perceived as a positive thing. In this chapter I look more closely at the reasoning behind design. This chapter disputes the process simplicity and gives more depth to design decision-making. The theories I explore in this chapter offer slightly contradicting views on selecting design features.

Recognition is key in the competitive market. However, the process of recognition can be conscious or unconscious and therefore consumers can recognize the product and its features without much knowledge of it. (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010) This meaning that the recognition causes may not be prominent to all. When creating recognition for a brand, design is a feasible way to go for a company. The importance of a single product intensifies when a company has a small product portfolio. This means that every new model or product can have a great impact on brand recognition. Design plays an important role and design decisions can have extensive implications for brand identity. Design can be used to reflect the company’s values, to develop consistency over the product range and to define the distinguishing attributes. These designed product features that compose a brand message are called design features. (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010) Karjalainen and Snelders introduce the relation between brand strategy and product design as acts of “semantic transformation”. Semantics deals with how a meaning is formed by signs that are represented in products and recognized by others. (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010)

According to Karjalainen and Snelders, clear references are embedded in design features that designers implement with the intention of being immediately perceived and recognized. These are often features in the product that have relatively distinct object boundaries (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010). More implicit references are however based on features not so readily distinguished in the product but implemented with the intention of being inherently perceived and recognized without customers being consciously aware of them. (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010)

- **Extrinsic cues: attributes that are not a part of the physical product but are added by retailers or manufacturers (brand name, price, packaging.)** (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010)
- **Intrinsic cues- refer to product attributes that re inherent in the product (e.g. fiber content, style, color)** (Karjalainen & Snelders, 2010)

Established styles can help consumers recognize products from a particular brand. In order to leverage this aspect product designers are challenged with the task of detecting tangible attributes such as shapes, colors and materials and identifying the meanings associated with these attributes. (Person & Snelders, 2009) Person and Snelders (2009) also mention the risks of identifying and interpreting these attributes: the danger is that some important characteristics of brand styles and their meaning may be overlooked. This disregard of important characteristics can happen intentionally: for example where a company establishes a new style without reincorporating any old brand related features to the new products. Telling brands apart can be very tricky for a consumer. Person and Snelders explain this using an example of gardening equipment. The writers suggest that consumers are unlikely to recognize a single brand style amongst two separate companies Caterpillar and Stiga. These companies have the same color scheme and sturdy features, yet the other one is a gardening company from Sweden and the other one is an American producer of heavy machinery. The perception of a brand style in this case may be heavily framed by what the consumers already know about the brand. There is also a more abstract level, similar to the previous Karjalainen and Snelders (2010) theory of conscious and unconscious recognition. Person and Snelders (2009) point out that for example Alessi products express certain playfulness throughout their products, without sharing any concrete design attributes. However this link to childhood works as a

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reoccurring reference to a particular brand style. (Person & Snelders, 2009) So one might think that when a brand has a strong style, there is not as much need for consistency among the products.

Design processes may vary between companies and when looking at heritage fashion brands it is good to keep in mind that there may be different processes when designing new products. It is interesting to compare original products and new products to find hints and similarities or irregularities in design. Person and Snelders for example suggest that sometimes designers or the companies they work for are not aware that they are creating the same style over and over again. In other words, designers or companies may not be aware of what is relevant for the current company image, product functions or consumer needs. However, habitually designed products may also be a contemplated solution in a commercial setting or competition between brands. This repeating of a design can be deliberate and intended to associate a visual identity to a brand. (Person & Snelders, 2009) Person and Snelders offer a process view of design as they list three phases of developing a brand style. These three phases called the search phase, nurture phase and vary phase imply that there can be different perspectives on market differentiation at different stages of the production of a brand style (Person & Snelders, 2009). In the search phase a designer or design team explore for solutions to a new problem or a challenge facing a producer. In this phase earlier solutions and accepted working procedures are beneficial to the designer and the designer may also refer back to previous alternatives. (Person & Snelders, 2009) A nurture phase may follow the search phase. In the Nurture phase a company is decided on a set of solutions to a problem and then requests the designers to repeat these solutions onto new products. So called “lead products” can emerge in this phase, because initially designed products become recognizable reference points for designers and consumers. (Person & Snelders, 2009) This nurture phase may also bring up some not so relevant products. The nurture phase extends until a new search phase begins or a vary phase activates. In a vary phase a designer attempts to build on settled original brand styles by incorporating new brand style references. (Person & Snelders, 2009)

Ravasi and Lojacono (2005) also stress the importance of intentional and strategic designing. Their research indicates how important it is for a company to have a design philosophy that co-evolves with the company’s competitive scope. A design philosophy may help designers gain meaningful strategic direction if their work is related to a larger scope of competition and market positioning, (Ravasi & Lojacono, 2005)



IMAGE 13  
Alessi Kastor  
pencil sharpener

In the literature review I looked into different ways that a brand can leverage its history. I looked into previous research about brand extensions in order to gain a general understanding about how heritage fashion brands go about adding new product lines and why these lines are added. I also explored reasons for collaborating and how advertising and other branding activities can increase the success of a brand with history. I found the literature on fashion labels and strategic design quite limited, but there were good examples from other fields of design. I also familiarized myself with research about branding strategies and design. I wanted to include a design perspective, because this angle would add to my thesis research question about the interrelation of different strategies used in heritage fashion brands. In addition, it seems that although heritage fashion brands have an iconic status, the appearance of these heritage lines is what is eventually important. In that sense, the literature on design decisions was helpful and revealing and I gained good insight into the reasoning behind design.

The past literature on managing extensions seemed to emphasize strategic approach on how to manage the visual identity of a product or a brand from a managerial position. Although this thesis has a design perspective, I did not want to go into specifics about how to manage designers in a company. The scope of this literature review was mainly a look into different elements that I felt were important to acknowledge when discussing fashion brands with heritage extensions. Although I find all of the themes examined in literature review relevant with this thesis, I feel the section about design reasoning to be most insightful.

Having gained an overall understanding from previous research I hope the case study to still shed light on some more specific areas. In the case study I will to look into design and how much of the original brand these heritage extensions have transferred onto the new products. The case study should also give me an answer to how common some of the strategies mentioned in the literature review are. The cases should also help reveal more about the advertising myth and how general it might be with these heritage fashion brands.

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CASE STUDY  
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HOW FASHION  
BRANDS USE  
BRAND LEGACY.

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The need for a case study became evident once I began to explore heritage brands online. I felt I needed more information to be able to answer the research questions. Although I gained a lot of general information from the literature review I needed to understand how fashion brands in particular go about extending their offering as heritage. The case study was also necessary for company comparison. It is obvious that companies have different strategies for marketing and design, which is why I wanted to look into several companies for a more holistic picture of how these heritage fashion brands use their history. I also needed to know the role of the fashion industry and the kind of differences it might present in the history leveraging strategies.

The examination of a selection of brand extensions began with identifying well-known brands that are acknowledged to have some kind of a heritage collection. I had no previous knowledge of the extensions and the process began with researching known brands with history and possible brand extensions. I decided to focus on brands that emerged in similar contexts. These were associations to street wear sites and well-established online shops selling heritage brands. Once I had browsed through a list of potential brands I made a selection for a case study based on variety and information found. The case study was performed on corpus of six heritage brands, which were selected by exploring the history of these companies on the company websites and other online sources with background information on the companies. The study of the cases was performed strictly online, due to the recent nature of the heritage phenomenon; meaning it is mostly discussed online. The methodological challenge was to identify these heritage brands and find enough knowledge about these brands to map and discuss their strategies and possible brand extension.

After online analysis the accumulated information was compared with the literature review findings and the results were mapped into a strategy-framework of *what they did and why*. Comparing the design in the products of the original brand and the new products, I performed a similarity and contrast analysis with pictures found online. In addition to design of the products, I looked into branding activities such as advertising and viral marketing. I needed to compare these aspects of the case companies as well to see if there were any hints of myths in their advertising.

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## METHOD

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## CASE SELECTION

In addition to brand websites and online-magazines there are several blogs that have been dedicated to heritage fashion brands. The case brands can be found in blogs such as A Continuous Lean and The Sartorialist<sup>2</sup>, which are partially to 'blame' for the revival of these brands. These mentioned blogs were also a good source of knowledge in the jumble of these heritage brands. There is also a Canadian magazine and online store called the Inventory magazine<sup>3</sup> that is devoted to heritage brands and the brands I selected for my analysis are sold around the world in stores that mostly consist of collections that are hand picked and curated representing heritage collections.

According to Silverman (2010) a collective case study is where a number of cases are studied in order to investigate some general phenomenon. In this case the phenomenon I am trying to describe and examine is the heritage fashion phenomenon and the brand extensions that have possibly derived from or during the phenomenon. The selection of the 6 companies is based on theoretical sampling grounded in online research of fashion brands. Theoretical sampling is when groups or categories are selected for examining on the basis of their relevance to research questions or theoretical position and most importantly the explanation or interpretation which is being developed. (Silverman, 2010) Therefore these cases were selected to help me analyze the brand extension strategies that are talked about in the literature and how these example companies have or have not implemented them. The idea with theoretical sampling is, that it helps build certain characteristics or criteria, which help develop and test a theory or an explanation. (Silverman, 2010) I read e-articles about the heritage fashion phenomenon and these heritage fashion brands in general. During this scanning phase certain brands emerged multiple times in these articles. The brands that I chose appear to be continuously developing to match current fashion, which makes them an interesting selection for this case study from fashion design's perspective. In addition, all of these brands seem to have become increasingly identifiable as the heritage fashion phenomenon has become more widespread. However, they are not chosen simply because they are all similar, but also because some of them may have inconsistency with what is said in previous research and literature. The possible branding and design strategy variances among the chosen cases are essential because they demonstrate the different ways a fashion brand can utilize its history.

When looking at online shopping platforms that sell the selected heritage brands, I noticed the vast quantities of companies with very similar brand stories. There are many brands being inspired by this heritage utilization. Therefore, the brands of this case analysis represent a kind of cross section of heritage brands. It is difficult to tell whether the brands have suddenly boomed with popularity or if there have been actual design strategies. In most brands it seems the change from utilitarian to fashion has been both the influence of consumer fashion in general and the heritage brand phenomenon, but also brands picking up on the phenomenon and answering to new kinds of consumer needs. There are variances in the ways the brands have used their history. Some brands have added a new line, some have simply revived the “classics” with design and some have left all the products untouched, but the visual identity of the brand has clearly been rejuvenated.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.acontinuouslean.com>  
<http://www.thesartorialist.com>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.inventorymagazine.com>



Woolrich Woolen Mills is the heritage take on the Woolrich brand that started out in the beginning of the 19th century. The original company was founded by John Rich II, son of an English wool carder who set off from Liverpool together with other European emigrants in search of a new life. Finally, John Rich II came to USA and founded the Woolrich Woolen Mills in Pennsylvania. The original Woolrich brand is known for iconic Americana with a sophisticated take on military. The clothes are designed in the spirit of outdoor, American sportswear and utilitarian style. In addition to this heritage line the Woolrich-company also has a collection of house wear called Woolrich home furnishings, a casual wear collection called the Woolrich John Rich & Bros. and a fabric collection called Woolrich Quality Fabrics. (Mills, 2013) Woolrich Woolen mills belong to WP Lavori in Corso, an international fashion brand licensor and distributor, and retail group. WP Lavori in Corso is the licensee and distributor of several other iconic brands like Woolrich Woolen Mills. For example heritage companies such as Barbour and Baracuta belong to these brands. (Troy, 2013)

#### THE TAKE ON HERITAGE

Woolrich Woolen Mills is said to be a project that is a result of the passion of the rediscovery of American manufacturing tradition (Mills, 2013). The story of the heritage line started with the hiring of designer Daiki Suzuki, who could be considered as the father of the heritage fashion phenomenon. The New-york-based designer grew up in Japan, and started his work wear inspired line Engineered Garments 1999. In 2006 Woolrich recruited Suzuki to design a younger brand-offshoot of the outdoor clothier and Woolrich Woolen Mills was born. This designer collaboration is remarked as one of the first collaborations in the spirit of heritage brands. (Mills, 2013) Daiki Suzuki did his last collection in 2010. Later in the year Marc McNairy took over from the next seasons. It is interesting to compare how these two designers have used the same archives as a design source. The heritage interpretation of Daiki Suzuki seems to be more straight forward with the retro image of the woolrich brand, where as Mark McNairy has a more bold way of designing this heritage line. Especially in the recent season Mark McNairy has combined the original brand looks with other retro inspirations such as vintage motorsports.

The design of the heritage line, with both of the designers, stems from the original brand aesthetics. In the early stages of the company, the original Woolrich featured basic outdoor wear for sports and woolen hunting outfits as well as blankets, mittens and socks. One of the iconic pieces of the Woolrich brand is the Artic Parka that was originally designed for workers constructing the Alaskan pipeline; understandably the design was made to last in very harsh weather conditions. Most of the clothes seen in the heritage line are rooted in the needs of pioneers like lumberjacks and farmers. (Mills, 2013) (www.woolrich.com, 2013)

The design of the heritage line is clearly inspired by the history of the brand. The connection is therefore much stronger with the historic products, than the designs of Woolrich today. It states on the Woolrich Woolen Mills website that the heritage collection is geared towards a target that values tradition and wants to possess authentic and functional products. (www.woolrich.com, 2013) The fabrics and the looks for the WWM collections are drawn from the iconic pieces designed for workers. The designs are however made in a very contemporary style and the look is tailored and sophisticated. Many of the outdoor garments are a mix of the original woolen fabrics and more technical fabrics, bringing the work wear inspired clothes to present-day.

*I'm basically trying to explore the lesser-known aspects of Woolrich's history. I'm not incredibly interested in the whole outdoors, hunting and fishing thing. I appreciate it for what it is, but for me there are more interesting, lesser known parts of their history- blue collar workwear and military specifically. I want to broaden horizons and let people know about these things.* ‘ – Mark McNairy in New Order Magazine 2011, (Oliver, 2011, p. 108)

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WOOLRICH  
WOOLEN  
MILLS

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IMAGE 14  
Woolrich  
Archives



IMAGE 15  
WWM by  
Daiki Suzuki  
in 2009



IMAGE 16  
WWM by  
Daiki Suzuki  
in 2010



IMAGE 17  
WWM by Mark McNairy Fall  
2014 Lookbook Example 1



IMAGE 18  
WWM by Mark McNairy Fall  
2014 Lookbook Example 2

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CARHARTT  
WIP

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Carhartt or Carhartt wip (Work in Progress) is the purest example of a brand extension where the original brand has been in the category of functional work wear and has then extended to a new line of fashion items originating from the features that have been embossed in the established collections of the original brand. In the case of Carhartt the history is also well representing the birth and the signals leading up to the creation of this extension.

Hamilton Carhartt founded the original Carhartt brand in Detroit in 1889. The first products of Carhartt were work overalls made from sturdy fabric called duck and denim. The duck fabric later became Carhartt’s trademark fabric. Since the beginning the Carhartt brand tried to meet the highest standards of durability, comfort and quality. Carhartt’s initial growth in 1890’s was focused on railroad workers, however overtime the company further developed their trademark features of durability, use of heavy-duty threads and reinforcing rivets at vital stress points. (Michel, 1992) Over time they also turned to high technology materials resistant to water, abrasion and flames. The company soon became one of the largest outfitters for tradespeople in the United States and for generations the Carhartt brand was strictly utilitarian. (Michel, 1992)

Interestingly enough, in the late 1980’s drug dealers and sprayers took Carhartt clothing to the streets. A Carhartt jacket was the perfect thing to wear when trying to keep warm and carry a lot of things. Soon the youth saw these dealers on the streets and it became the hip thing to wear. In 1990 Tommy boy records, a hip-hop label decided to use the jacket as a promotional tool, having already become popular on the streets. The jackets were embroidered with the Tommy Boy Records-company logo and eight hundred of these jackets were distributed to “taste makers and people seen in all the right places”. (Michel, 1992) (History/ Carhartt wip) This turned out to be a success and soon after Carhartt became the thing to wear for subcultures that affiliated with rap music. These could be perceived as the first steps of the Carhartt brand changing its category from functional to fashion.



IMAGE 19  
Carhartt men’s  
outerwear ad

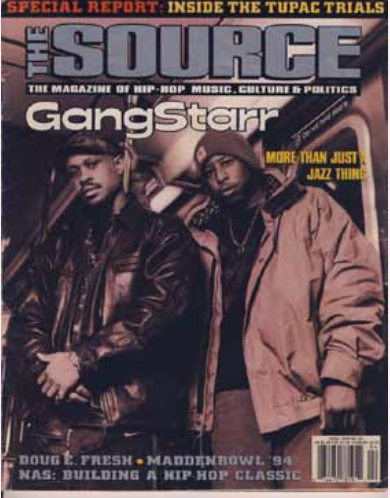


IMAGE 20  
The Source magazine  
cover, April 1994



THE TAKE ON HERITAGE

Carhartt WIP heritage line was born soon after the successful invasion of the Carhartt into subcultures. This heritage line could also be called a brand extension, because the change of market and therefore context is so drastic. Carhartt goods had occasionally found their way to Europe via independent companies, but in 1994 Carhartt WIP began their distribution network for Carhartt in Europe. This initiated with Carhartt introducing classic products from the original work wear range to the new market (History/ Carhartt WIP). Wanting to accommodate to new and changing needs of the European street wear scene Carhartt WIP started to further develop the original designs of the Carhartt heritage. This far, the designs had been tailored to fit the average American worker, but this meant the garments were all around wider and shorter in the sleeves than a European consumer found fitting. Therefore in 1997, wanting to address these fit issues Carhartt WIP presented its first Carhartt range produced for and available exclusively in Europe. With the approval of the Carhartt headquarters Carhartt WIP re-interpreted and adapted the original cuts to better suit the street wear scene. The cuts and design of the original brand were progressed further to be used in active urban sports such as skateboarding and for everyday city lifestyle. (History/ Carhartt WIP) (Michel, 1992) Comparing the design of the original Carhartt and Carhartt WIP one can spot multiple design features that have been transformed to suit a new consumer group. The changes are subtle, but noticeable. Many of these changes are elements that could be said to emphasize street wear features.

For most part, the design of the Carhartt workwear garment has stayed true to the origin and many of the trademark features are still visible in the garments. These features include the use of harmonious color scheme that is usually available in both tops and bottoms. Cuts and fit have been adjusted, but there are still garments available in “the original fit”. The use of multiple pockets for functional purposes is still one main design feature and the overall look of the clothes is clean and simple. The same iconic items are still around, such as jackets, overalls, workpants and gloves. Many of the garments designed over 100 years ago still exist. (Michel, 1992)

Carhartt WIP supports affinity groups such as artists, musicians and skateboarders and looks the part. Carhartt WIP also known as the Carhartt street wear brand has a strong bond to the original brand and can even be mistaken for the original brand. However the WIP- Carharts’ are styled as street wear and offer more options in fabrics, colors and prints. It is available for both men and women and is probably most recognizable from items like jackets, sweatshirts and beanies. Many of the Carhartt WIP products are born as results of collaborations.

Carhartt WIP has done multiple collaborations with many interesting and unexpected companies; most of them however being street wear companies. These collaborations develop limited edition collectables that are very sought after by consumers who dress and swear by certain brands. These collaborations still accentuate Carhartt’s good qualities like durability and comfort, but the visual outcome is often more elaborated than in the basic Carhartt WIP collections. These collaborations highlight Carhartt’s street wear style and produce new interpretations of the iconic pieces.

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IMAGE 21  
Carhartt jacket  
and beanie  
in the film La Haine



IMAGE 22  
CARHARTT WIP  
ss 2013



Gitman Vintage is a brand extension of Gitman Bros. a custom ready-made shirt factory that has been making men’s quality shirts in Ashland, Pennsylvania for over 70 years. The shirts are American made and represent high quality craftsmanship and exclusive style. Gitman Vintage has been introduced as a new division of Gitman Bros. The vintage line pays tribute to the heritage of the Gitman Bros., but with distinct differences. (Gitman Vintage, 2013) Elements such as finely crafted button down oxfords are available also in the Gitman Vintage collection, but each season is a curated remake interpretation of the past. Favorites from old Gitman Bros. fabrics are newly selected, remade and adopted to fit the vintage collection. There are also seasonal styles incorporated into the collection made from hand picked selections of fabrics sourced from around the world and made in the United States.



IMAGE 23  
Gitman Brothers Classic  
Button down

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GITMAN  
VINTAGE

THE TAKE ON HERITAGE

The main item and the most sold item of Gitman Vintage collection is the snugly fitted button down shirt following the Gitman Bros. legacy. These colorful and playful looking button downs are designed using fabrics that are newly designed from the archives of Gitman Bros. The Gitman Vintage dress shirts are more flashy and absurd then in the original brand, and many of the motives have been given a highly contemporary spin. The hangtags and the labels have been preserved to create associations with the original brand and there are only slight differences in the visual brand identities of these two collections. There are also a few shirts offered for women in the vintage line, similarly to the Gitman Bros. sister line for women.

Gitman vintage is sold in many online stores dedicated to heritage brands and Gitman Vintage also collaborates with trendy online shops such as a Swedish online shop called Trés Bien that sells selected brands. The online shop has several other heritage brands in their selection. Gitman Vintage has also made a special line of shirts in “Swedish style” for the shop. Gitman Vintage also did a collaboration with a Russian online store called FOTT, that also has an in-store magazine called FOTTPAPER that in return did a piece about Gitman Vintage. They have also collaborated several times with Opening Ceremony (see 5.2.5 Pendleton).

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IMAGE 24  
Gitman Vintage  
Flower shirt





It seems that these collaborations have been done to gain publicity and each of these collaborations is in synthesis with companies that have similar values and feel to them as Gitman Vintage. Perhaps they have been chosen to create the right kind of exposure and image for the company as well as to increase sales. These image driven collaborations emphasize the brand as belonging to a group of brands with well-crafted quality items.

In addition to seasonal collections curated from old fabrics Gitman Vintage has also created extra merchandise in contemporary fabrics such as accessories for men like pocket squares and bowties. This is could also be seen as a subtle leap to a different target market, sense the original Gitman Bros makes traditional ties.

The collections are kept fresh with editing and changing up the iteration of the classics. The designers visit the mills, keep files with photos and notes on likes/dislikes and make study trips to fabric fairs. (Need Supply, 2013)

Gitman vintage website describes their history in the about section of their website. It reveals the anatomy of a shirt by showing the work that goes into a Gitman Vintage shirt. The consumers that are after these heritage brands usually value authenticity and artistry, so it is understandable that these elements are highlighted about the products. The websites have some similarities, but the original brand Gitman Bros. website is more conservative looking, where as the Gitman Vintage homepage is more contemporary. The Gitman Vintage division also has its own blog where there are notifications about current collaborations and happenings.



IMAGE 25  
Gitman Vintage  
shirt in Kimono -  
Camo print

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IMAGE 26  
Tres Bien  
Shop x Gitman  
Vintage



s.n.s Herning is a company from Denmark that was originally established to protect fishermen from harsh weather conditions. I chose this company as a case example, because the company and the designs have remained almost unchanged, but the offering has been made contemporary with advertising and by building on the heritage myth. This example is also interesting, because the company is not American like the other case examples.

Søren Nielsen Skyt, a young man who made his living by selling knitted garments to fishermen founded the company in 1931. In the 1920's he learned a technique of “bobble” patterns that increased the insulating abilities of garments, which were perfect for the fishermen who needed protection from rough weather and hard work at sea. s.n.s has been knitting the fisherman’s sweaters on the same patterns and machinery since 1931 and the same technique is still used to craft these garments. The cut, measurements and the bobble pattern remain the same. All though more sweaters have been added to the repertoire overtime, the fisherman’s sweaters are still in the core of the production. The new designs take after the original fisherman’s sweaters in terms of functionality, technique, texturing, and aesthetics. There is also a dress in the collection for women, made with the same bobble-pattern technique. (s.n.s HERNING)

THE TAKE ON HERITAGE

The collection has grown more contemporary by the years and now days it holds pieces that are suited for different contemporary styles. These products have been styled as classics as well as parts of street style outfits. There are also small additions like beanies in seasonal colors, scarves, and mittens. Although the bobble-pattern is the most well known S. N. S Herning texture, the collection variety has also grown in terms of lighter weight materials that are used in pieces like cardigans and scarves.



IMAGE 27  
Old Picture of fishermen  
wearing S.N.S Herning

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S.N.S  
HERNING

It appears the brand heritage is conveyed in all customer touch points. The s.n.s Herning history is emphasized well on the official website and even in the online store. Each garment has a coding of the first year they were released in the product details. Craftsmanship is also mentioned in the hangtags and each artisan is given tribute by having them sign the sweaters they make. This makes the products ever more exclusive.

According to articles written about s.n.s Herning the company made its comeback in 2007, when it started to collaborate with other companies. These collaborations with well-known fashion labels have been helpful with contemporizing the s.n.s Herning image. Among these collaborations was a project with Comme Des Garçons, where s.n.s Herning designed sweaters true to the label, but with neon effects. Another collaboration was with Gram shoe-company. In this collaboration s.n.s Herning provided Gram shoes with colorful knitted laces. The third well-known collaboration was with online store Trés Bien-shop, which with many of these heritage companies has collaborated. In this collaboration s.n.s Herning designed uniquely colored and individually signed sweaters in limited numbers for the online store.

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IMAGE 28  
S.N.S Herning  
traditional knit



IMAGE 29  
S.N.S Herning  
x  
Comme Des Garçons

Pendleton is an example of a company that has a very strong and distinct visual identity. The Pendleton story began in the state of Oregon by a young English weaver Thomas Kay in 1863. Thomas Kay helped work on the mills of the east coast and later opened his own mill in Salem Oregon. Thomas Kay’s daughter Fannie grew into the mill business and later in life combined her mill business skills with her manufacturing wise husband C.P Bishop. This was the beginning of Pendleton Woolen Mills. The textile-retail heritage was passed on to three Bishop sons, Clarence, Roy and Chauncey. In 1909 the Bishops sons started up a mill in Pendleton, Oregon. The town of Pendleton was a wool-shipping center for sheep growers of the region. The mill was a renovated old mill that had previously worked as a scouring plant, which washed the raw wool before shipping. Later on it had produced bed blankets and robes for Native Americans, but the venture had failed due to its unprofitability. After major construction work on the facility The Bishop brothers continued with the production of bed blankets and robes, and added business concepts and distinctive styling to the products. (Pendleton, 2013)

The colors that Pendleton is known for these days are a result of research into color and design preferences of local and Southwest Native Americans. Soon the business expanded to the Navajo, Hopi and Zuni nations and these blankets with vivid colors and patterns were used as basic wearing apparel and as standard of value for trading and credit among Native Americans. In 1912 the Bishop family expanded to a weaving mill Washougal, Washington and broadened its production capability to woven fabrics. The production of woolen shirting material was the next step for Pendleton. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century wool shirts were popular among men who worked outdoors. The shirts were dull in color and design, but they protected the wearer from the outdoor elements. From the vision of Clarence Morton Bishop, the production of woolen shirting material was born. He imagined wool shirts in vivid colors and intricate patterns. By 1929 Pendleton was making men’s virgin wool sportswear. In 1949 womenswear was added to the production. Market research had recognized a need and an opportunity for branded virgin wool classic sportswear for women. One of the most popular garments was the 49er jacket. The design was simple and it matched the emerging suburban lifestyle of postwar America. By 1972 Pendleton became a year-round sportswear resource producing non-wool menswear and womenswear. (Pendleton, 2013)

Pendleton products were distributed through selected department and specialty stores until in 1980 Pendleton opened its own retail division that covered both company and privately owned specialty stores. Today the company owns and operates 7 facilities, manages 75 Pendleton retail stores and publishes apparel home direct mail catalogs as well as operates the Pendleton store online. (Pendleton, 2013) The core of the Pendleton brand is in the fabrics, the vivid colors and the Native American inspired patterns. The Pendleton brand is a manufacturer of casual apparel for men and women.

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PEDLETON

THE TAKE ON HERITAGE

Pendleton has achieved new designs through multiple collaborations, which of some were executed simultaneously. Several of the collaborations are done as single design items from known designers. However the most well spread collaborations have been with smaller contemporary brands that have already established at least a niche fashion following and are known to carry fashionable items. This seems to be very well thought over, because this way Pendleton has targeted the collections straight to the consumers that are the most potential buyers.

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IMAGE 30  
Pendleton 49's jacket

IMAGE 31  
Japan Workwear magazine  
and Pendleton blankets



PENDLETON X OPENING CEREMONY

Collaborations with Opening Ceremony<sup>4</sup> were available from fall 2009 until the last collection in spring 2011. These collaborations took Pendleton fabrics to a wider audience and gave the brand a lot of international attention. Opening Ceremony was also Pendleton’s first significant collaboration. The collaboration was done to celebrate Pendleton’s 100th anniversary to applaud the company’s status as an iconic American brand. Opening Ceremony has also done a similar collaboration with Levi’s and is known for different collaborations since their founding in 2002. The collection Pendleton X Opening Ceremony fall 2009 consisted of items with original Pendleton look wool fabrics designed with the Opening Ceremony free spirit. These items were extra colorful and manifested Pendleton’s character prints in new ways. The fabrics used in pants, skirts and hats were used in blankets or more casual ways in the original brand designs. The collection has many basics and is apt for layering. Shapes have been designed to look a little more out there: skirts were a little shorter and pants had altered proportions. The cuts are unconventional and the color design with the existing fabrics makes interesting new shapes.

In the next seasons of the Pendleton X Opening Ceremony there were more classical pieces added to the collection, but at the same time colors became bolder and new more contemporary prints were added. There is similar play with the classic shapes as in the previous season and comparable amount of layering. Also it seems, the same design aesthetics are present as in the previous season, but the styling and advertising is done more eccentrically, making this last collection the biggest leap image wise from the original brand. The design is gradually shifting towards more fashion forward with each season of this Opening Ceremony collaboration.

<sup>4</sup> The founders of Opening Ceremony; Carol Lim and Humberto Leon describe Opening Ceremony as a place for sharing the passion for travel, art and fashion. The company is run employing features characteristic of the modern Olympics to their business; meaning a multinational approach to retail. In addition to stocking both iconic and emerging homegrown designers, every year Opening Ceremony showcases the spirit and merchandise of a visiting country, transforming each store into a marketplace for exotic souvenirs and international talent.



IMAGE 32  
Pendleton  
X  
Opening Ceremony  
fall 2009

THE PORTLAND COLLECTION -  
A PENDLETON HERITAGE LINE

In 2011 Pendleton launched *The Portland Collection* as a kind of homage to the Pendleton (Woolen Mills) origin and roots. This line is quite similar to Gitman Vintage take on Gitman Bros. This new line was done as part of the Pendleton Company drawing inspiration from the company’s design heritage and own archives. The designers of the Portland Collection reached as far back as the 1800s and early 1900s to highlight the square design of that era (Garvin, 2012). “While Pendleton’s signature line leans towards classic lines and cuts, the Portland Collection is geared to young, informed consumers who don’t want to sacrifice aesthetics for an ethical product. To create the new label, Nathaniel Crissman, Rachel Turk, and John Blasioli combed Pendleton’s archives to unearth the “Harding” jacquard pattern, a staple blanket motif for decades.” (Champion, 2011). Designers Crissman, Turk and Blasioli have fused their modern aesthetics with the brand’s iconic, Native American-inspired jacquard prints. All garments are made in the United States. (Champion, 2011) Designers created a new exclusive fabric story for The Portland Collection. The new color palette was made broader and the fabrics with familiar motifs were made in variety of weights to showcase Pendleton Woolen mills competence. (Garvin, 2012) The collection was launched in specialty stores in the United States, Canada Japan and Europe as well as online stores. (Champion, 2011)

The style of the fall 2013 Portland collection is the manifestation of the present-day heritage fashion phenomenon. The collection has many original elements like wool knits and jumper dresses, but these basics are paired up with leggings, graphical print induced two pieces and baseball caps. The designs are simple and the shapes are quite classic in their simplicity, but also current to the year 2013. These garments are spot on trend and have evolved with the trends from the previous Portland Collection- collection. The design is clearly keeping up with the seasons of the fashion cycle, but the attributes of good quality and the materials are still loyal to the Pendleton signature brand. The colors and prints are also staying true to the original brand but are turning the Pendleton classics to modernized versions of themselves. Close attention is paid to details and the design is updated with contemporary finishes and haberdasheries.

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IMAGE 33  
Portland  
collection  
2012



The expression “ if it’s been here long enough, it must be a good shoe” fits the Red Wing-shoe company image very well. Within 10 years of founding the company, Red Wing shoes was producing more than 200,000 pairs of boots for American soldiers in World War I and it also manufactured for war use during World War II. Red Wing shoe-company has had a lot of Internet press coverage and is a well-known heritage company around the world. There are roughly 100 workers at Red Wing that are second- or third –generation shoemakers. (Wilson, 2011) Red Wings original brand is still producing work shoes and boots, but the discussions revolve around their glorified heritage collection of shoes and boots derived from the original models.

Like many heritage brands Red Wing- Shoe Company has had a strong past with purposeful products. The Red Wings have been made to outlast harsh working conditions for workers in industries such as logging, mining and farming. The shoes have been made comfortable and convey a promise of endurance and quality. The original collections have offered a choice of oxfords, chukkas and hiking boots. There are also other Red Wing owned brands being produced by different names: Vasque hiking boots, Worx work shoes for heavy duty industries, Irish setter work shoes and Irish setter Hunt boots special made for hunting. All of these brands have the same aesthetic as the Red Wings shoes, but have more distinct features of the labor they are intended for.



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RED WING  
SHOE  
COMPANY

IMAGE 34  
Red Wings  
Shoes

THE TAKE ON HERITAGE

The Red Wings- heritage collection is an extension to the original brand that is remade from the original brands own archives. The styles in the Heritage collection are designed and built just as they were almost eighty years ago. The material is also the same red Wing Shoe Company leather from Red Wings own S.B Foot Tannery. Many of the shoes have different functional and technical features and special materials used for harsh conditions.

Fashion has subtly come into the picture via collaborations and small collections have been more for the fashion of the moment. Comparing the Red Wings original brand website and the heritage collection website, it is easy to see that the heritage collection has been remodeled to fit the fashion of the moment and the shoes are more suitable for casual everyday wearing. The original brands collection of shoes is much more technical and looking purposefully designed for different circumstances.

The heritage website has the whole collection of shoes well photographed and stories of the original designs. There are also small descriptions of different working tasks that the boots were designed for and some tough workmen are mentioned from the past. The leather made by the Red Wings S.B foot tannery is also showcased in the heritage website with examples of different heritage dyeing methods and finishing. The care instructions are also very impressive with detailed photos describing how to care for Red Wings shoes. These additional elements on the website make the shoes seem even more precious. It makes one think, that this is not just a simple shoe, but it has been made to last for a lifetime and I need to take care of it.

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IMAGE 35  
Benny Gold  
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Jansport  
X  
Red Wing

# 6

## 6 THE RESULTS OF THE CASE STUDY

In the case analysis I drew my conclusions about the case brands with heritage extensions from the information I found online and reflected my findings with the literature review. The websites of these brands are a good example of the kind of image and market context these brands want to position themselves in. Each of these brands has a homepage that communicates something about the company legacy and heritage. Many of the brands also have videos that create a feel for the brand and showcase the workers of these brands. The videos also show the labor that goes into making a product by that particular brand and how the same old techniques still apply. These homepages and videos made for advertising purposes lead the consumer closer to the brands and try to pass on the passion and the excitement of company founders. These websites are where the brand history of quality craftsmanship is emphasized and the brand legacy is made more convincing.

The findings of this case analysis help me compare the different ways that heritage fashion companies can leverage their brand history. The literature review revealed how brands can leverage their history in general. It also gave me an idea of how brands emphasize their change in direction with advertising and the role that design plays in all of this. From the case analysis I gained even deeper insight into these matters and I was able to detect concrete design and marketing strategies for brand renewal. However, with some cases the recognition of different strategies is left a bit vague, due to my analysis method. The approaches that I was able to detect helped me compare these case brands to each other in order to define how these brands use their legacy. In chapter 7 I use this case study analysis and the literature review to make suggestions for R-collection brand and implement some of the findings in the idea collection.



The main findings in the literature review were about how a brand can benefit from its existing image and products. The previous research introduced different ways to leverage a brand by a brand extension, a line extension or by collaboration with another company. I discovered three main theories in chapter 2. First, the principal benefits of brand extensions are that they provide a way to leverage brand name recognition and known brand image to enter to new markets. Second, line extensions provide a channel for product innovations that can be beneficial for gaining competitive advantage. Third, brand collaborations are becoming more and more common and they are mainly done to help build brand’s image through the transfer of associations between the partner brands.

Chapter 3 introduced previous research about brand renewal and the role of advertising. This chapter also looked into the advertising myths. The main findings here were that history is seen as a positive asset, and marketers often augment or even create fictitious heritage to add meaning to a brand. The brands that are best suited for brand renewal are the ones that hold some kind of iconic status. It seems myth advertising is a way to promote the brands symbolic status, but it is also the means to question the authenticity of some brands.

The role of design was covered in chapter 4. The chapter about design explored design as an important aspect in image revitalizing and brand history leveraging. The main insight from chapter 4 was that design is used to reflect the company values, to develop consistency over the product range and to define the distinguishing attributes.

The cases match several generalizations about brand and line extensions that were covered in the literature review. Contemporizing and highlighting iconic garments is a typical way for heritage fashion brands to introduce an extension. Company history is seen as an asset and most heritage fashion brands with histories highlight craftsmanship, authenticity and quality in the promotion of the new extension. The brands are clearly using their brand legacy as a pedestal for the heritage extension. In addition, most of the heritage fashion brands carry the same name as the original brands, but have added a continuation to the name that represents the extension. For example: *Red Wing Shoes* to *Red Wing-heritage* collection and *Gitman Bros.* to *Gitman Vintage*. The names work as consumer clues about the extensions distinctive purposes or features. Brand name recognition was underlined in almost all of the case examples by linking the extension to the original brand name.

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LITERATURE  
REVIEW AND  
CASE STUDY  
SIMILARITIES

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Brand fit and brand associations with the original brand are underlined through out the literature review. In the case brands the product similarity of the original brand and the heritage collection is transferred mostly by feature based similarities and schema about functionality and superiority of the extended product. The original brand feature associations are emphasized in the appearance of these products. This is most visible if the design is based on the company’s own archives. The features are more noticeable with companies that have a strong visual heritage. The original brand associations and recognition is highlighted with the choice of materials and details in all case brands, but they are especially evident with Pendleton and Woolrich Woolen Mills. Both brands have vivid material archives and historical outfits that can be affiliated with a specific purpose such as hunting . Quality being one of the most desirable assets is extremely accentuated in the extensions as well. For example Red Wing shoes are made from durable quality leather and the whole production is designed to produce quality shoes. The material use and craftsmanship was mentioned in every article and advertisement composed about the Red Wing Shoe Company. It was also underlined, that the shoes are made like they have always been made. In the literature, Karjalainen and Snelders (2010) talk about products like these as lead products that serve as reference points for what the brand stands for and can be used as such during subsequent new product development.

Holt and Cameron (2012) stress that the heritage brand phenomenon has been built upon myths of durability, quality and good old times. The case brands in this thesis have authentic histories. However, the brands are clearly using myth advertising to visualize and convince the consumers of the brand’s past. Forney, Park and Brandon (2005) suggest that fashion brands should focus mostly on image creation when marketing a brand extension and this is exactly what all of these case companies seem to be doing. In all of the cases nostalgia branding is in some way visible and all brands are building upon the myths of their own history. For example, Red Wing Shoe Company has advertisements that enhance the superiority of the products and associate the product to history. The ads use rustic imaginary and slogans that remind us about the past. Another example, Pendleton frequently posts retro ad campaigns from the company archives on the company blog. These retro ad campaigns are often connected to a story about a new product that is somehow linked to the brands material archives. The brands seem to play on consumer’s appetite for nostalgia in general. This is noticeable in advertising and collection look books where the styling and visuals are chosen to emphasize associations and fantasies about the past. On the other hand, the look books and campaigns that advertise collaborations are often more contemporary and may even persuade away from the heritage associations.

The role of design in relation to branding is visible in all of the case brands. There are many similarities to the theories explored in chapter 4. The case brands use design as a symbolic medium for expressing and reinforcing brand elements. Karjalainen and Snelders (2010) point out that the importance of a single product intensifies when a company has a small product portfolio. This is slightly accurate with case brands Gitman Vintage and s.n.s Herning. Both brands rely immensely on a single product. Giman Vintage reinterprets a traditional men’s button down shirt and the s.n.s Herning brand is built around a fisherman’s sweater. Reinterpreting brand archives with design is similar to the theories of Ravasi and Lojacono (2005). Ravasi and Lojacono (2005) mention that design should happen in two phases. The first phase is described as the exploration of new applications for available resources and capabilities and generating new ideas. When comparing this theory with the case brands, the available resources could be the brand archives. Thus, the case brands use existing resources and capabilities but interpret them in a new way to generate ideas.

In the literature review I discuss the role of designers based on the writings of Person and Snelders. (Person & Snelders, 2009) The authors reinforce that design is a key in recognizing products from a particular brand and in order to leverage this aspect of product design, it is up to the designers to detect tangible attributes such as shapes, colors and materials and to identify the meanings associated with these attributes. In my opinion, Pendleton’s heritage line The Portland collection is a good example of this. The Portland collection has been designed based on the archives of the original brand, and even though the designs are made current they bear a strong connection to the original brand. I would also imagine, that most of the features that we somehow take notice of in these brands, are perhaps not



IMAGE 36  
Red Wing  
Heritage website  
(September 2014)

tangible, but are in a more passive role. These features are what Karjalainen and Snelders (2010) describe as implicit features. These are potentially unintentionally or passively added to the designs, but cannot be recognized actively. Feature and attribute associations between original brand and brand extension are emphasized especially with design. The products are designed with similarities in mind that immediately bridge the product back to the roots of the company.

It seems that with some case brands the design of the heritage collection products is done with subtle changes to lead products and the introduction of new features is done periodically in easily adaptable portions. In some cases the company management has perhaps been slow to act to changes suggested by designers or new designs emerging from collaborations. For example, according to an online article (Bojer S. T., 2012) Red Wing Shoe Company started out with a small item of colorful shoe laces to give time for the management to get on board with the new times and moved onto color the whole shoe from there. It seems that many of the companies have first gone through mild image renewal, which is understandable due to the strong brand image these companies rely on. Much like these case brands, the literature on leveraging brands reinforced that design driven renewal should be periodic and continuously resulting in extensions of product lines and features. It is difficult to know whether these companies have strong design philosophies, but it seemed like many of these case brands tried to enhance the perceptions of superior quality with the help of design, which is something the literature review dealt with as means of design consistency.

It is difficult to analyze whether a product is relevant or not based on mere pictures. However, the possible weaknesses in design can be spotted when looking at the whole collections from a perspective of cohesion and design efforts for brand continuum. It seems that some products might have been designed more as complements to somehow energize the collection. When reading about WP Lavori in Corso, the staff mentioned that as they research brands in the since of adding them to their portfolio they often come across negligence in terms of quality. (Cloudsdale;Grandi;Parrot;Roe;Watts;& Willms, 2013) This might suggest that some products have been designed as fillings in the collection. For example S.N.s Herning has had a very strict and classical look for decades and it seems that recently due to the heritage phenomenon their collection has expanded into more trend conscious accessories and garment designs. These additions are both adding and distracting from the original brand. On the other hand they rejuvenate the brand, but they may also lead to associations that are unbeneficial to the classic look that they cherish.

All of the case brands have done some kind of collaborations with other brands. Collaborating is extremely common with fashion brands in general and collaborating with heritage brands seems to be in sync with what is said in the literature. It is basically mixing together the intriguing and strong design features from both brands to come up with a new and unique product. The collaborations are done with brands that give the extension the appropriate associations or augment the coolness of the brand in the minds of consumers. These collaborations can have a big affect on the success of the extension. Much collaboration is also done to intensify the heritage myth and collaborations with well-known street credible brands belonging to a certain lifestyle add to the consumer base. Collaborating can also be an easier leap for a company, with lower risks of failing than doing an extension. Some of the collaborations have been very atypical and unexpected, but despite the oddity they have managed to have a positive influence on the company image. Collaborations like these represent versatility and a kind of youthfulness compared to the ‘antique’ original brands and can attract new customers. The collaborations are also highlighted on company websites and brand related social media.

- Following fashion trends in extensions: The literature mentioned subtle brand styling, but in fashion it can also mean following trends in a subtle way. This can be for example a subtle change in materials or cuts that are more prone towards current trends. A variation like this could be switch from leather to patent leather for a short season.
- Heritage marketing on Websites: It seems many of the case brands have websites that are designed to accentuate details, collaborations and special edition products. All of these are seen as reinforcing the aura of the brand. In a way listing the company’s history in a chronological order seems to be a kind of homage to the brand. This is very clear in all of the analyzed cases. They have all build on their own history and made their brand story intriguing and desirable to consumers. Many use blogs and other social media to communicate the heritage message. Most brands have a heritage drop down menu on their website where the history is almost tangible.
- Singling out items: Brands use visuals that highlight the brands exclusivity, but also product performance. Exclusivity is also added by singling out items; s.n.s Herning for example does this by having the Artisans sign the sweaters.
- Social media: The case companies are all connected to different social media platforms. The companies use social media for updates and brand story telling. Social media is also a way to engage consumers in a dialogue with the brand. This kind of interaction is a significant market research tool and a way to remind consumers of the brands roots.

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WHAT IS NEW AND NOT SAID IN THE LITERATURE?

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HERITAGE FASHION BRAND DESIGN AND BRANDING STRATEGIES

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One of the most common strategies among the case brands has been to emphasize a strong heritage foundation. This indicates that all of the case brands have used the company’s existing resources for new product development and image creation. A recurring design strategy is designing the new products according to the company archives. A repetitive design strategy in brand collaborations is to combine product features from both brands that embody recognizable brand elements. In addition, a noticeable design strategy with collections that are based on brand archives is the contemporizing and restyling of original brand looks. The heritage collections are often more current, more on trend and more bold.

Several of the brands I came across during my research into heritage brands were family owned businesses. This is also something that was emphasized with many of the case brands. The case brands promote that the beginning steps of these brands were taken together as a family or a small community. I would imagine this creates more authenticity and somehow makes the brand more reliable. In fact, brand community is strongly accentuated with all of the case brands. The brands use brand community creation as an inherent part of their branding strategies. This means that the consumers who are associated to these brands are thought of as being a part of a special *kinfolk*. An important element in all of the case brands is that they are strong enough labels to express a whole lifestyle. Accentuating that the brand reflects an entire lifestyle is a common tactic. Therefore another usual practice with these brands has been to highlight and advertise a whole lifestyle related to the heritage collection. In addition, viral marketing is used frequently to create more brand awareness and it seems that brand influencers are also used to influence potential buyers.

IMAGE 37  
Levi’s ad campaign features a town trying to recover.

IMAGE 38  
Mango fall 2014 campaign with “heritage-styling”

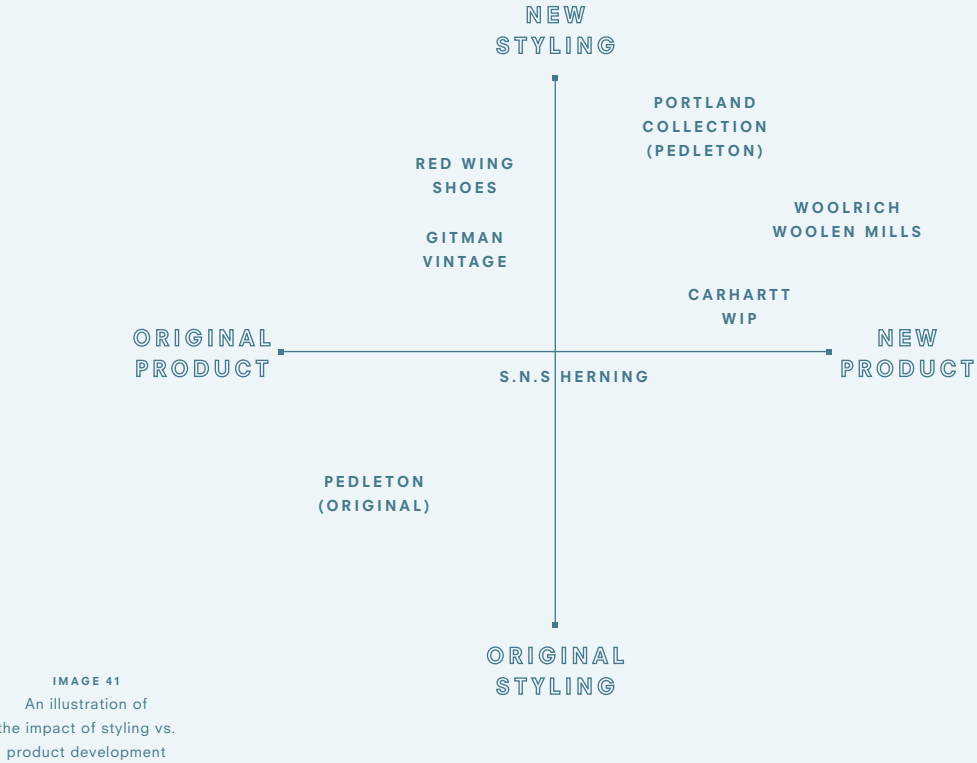
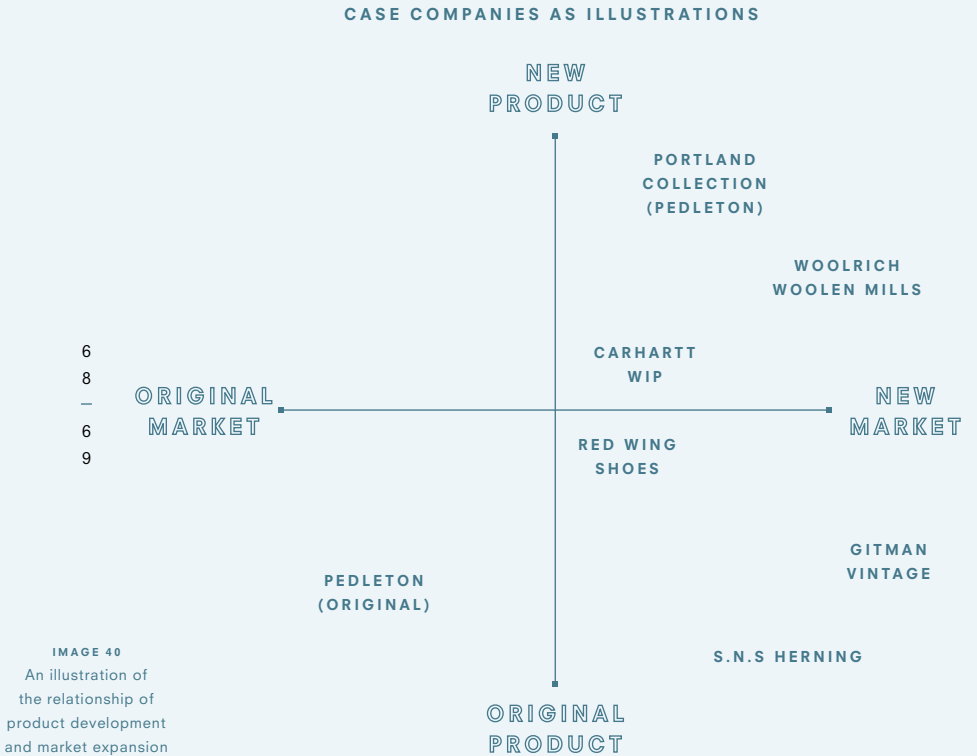


BRAND	WHAT THEY DID	WHY IT WAS POSSIBLE
WOOLRICH WOOLEN MILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used archives for inspiration</li> <li>Collaborated with street wear brands &amp; other heritage brand</li> <li>New nameline: Woolrich to Woolrich Woollen Mills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong original brand style (blanket material and functional looks)</li> <li>Interesting archive material</li> <li>Timing was right (trend)</li> </ul>
CARHARTT WIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Began to offer work wear accommodated for a new market</li> <li>Changed sizing and fit</li> <li>Collaborated with street wear brands &amp; other heritage brands</li> <li>New name line: Carhartt to Carhartt WIP</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invasion into subcultures</li> <li>Success in Europe</li> <li>Timing was right (trend)</li> <li>Myth advertising</li> </ul>
GITMAN VINTAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used archives for inspiration</li> <li>Collaborated with street wear brands &amp; other heritage brands</li> <li>New name line: Gitman Bros. to Gitman Vintage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interesting archive material</li> <li>Simplicity of original product</li> <li>Timing was right (trend)</li> <li>Collaboration choices</li> </ul>
S.N.S HERNING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revived original brand</li> <li>Changed sizing and fit</li> <li>Collaborated with street wear brands &amp; other heritage brands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong original design</li> <li>Bobble trademark knitting technique</li> <li>Myth advertising</li> <li>Collaboration choices</li> </ul>
PEDLETON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborated with street wear brands &amp; other heritage brands</li> <li>New line: Portland Collection, based on original brand (Pendleton) archives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong original brand style (Native American patterns)</li> <li>Collaboration choices</li> <li>Timing was right (trend)</li> </ul>
RED WING SHOES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used archives for inspiration</li> <li>Began to offer work wear accommodated for a new market</li> <li>New name line: Red Wing Shoes to Red Wing heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong original product</li> <li>Strong emphasis on quality</li> <li>Myth advertising</li> </ul>

IMAGE 39  
Brand comparison table

The table above displays my interpretation of how I believe each case brand has gone about their take on heritage and new (heritage) product offering. I also suggest why each brand was able to go forth with a new heritage line or why they possessed enough brand allegory to advance the heritage myth. The table has been constructed on the information I found in my case analysis.

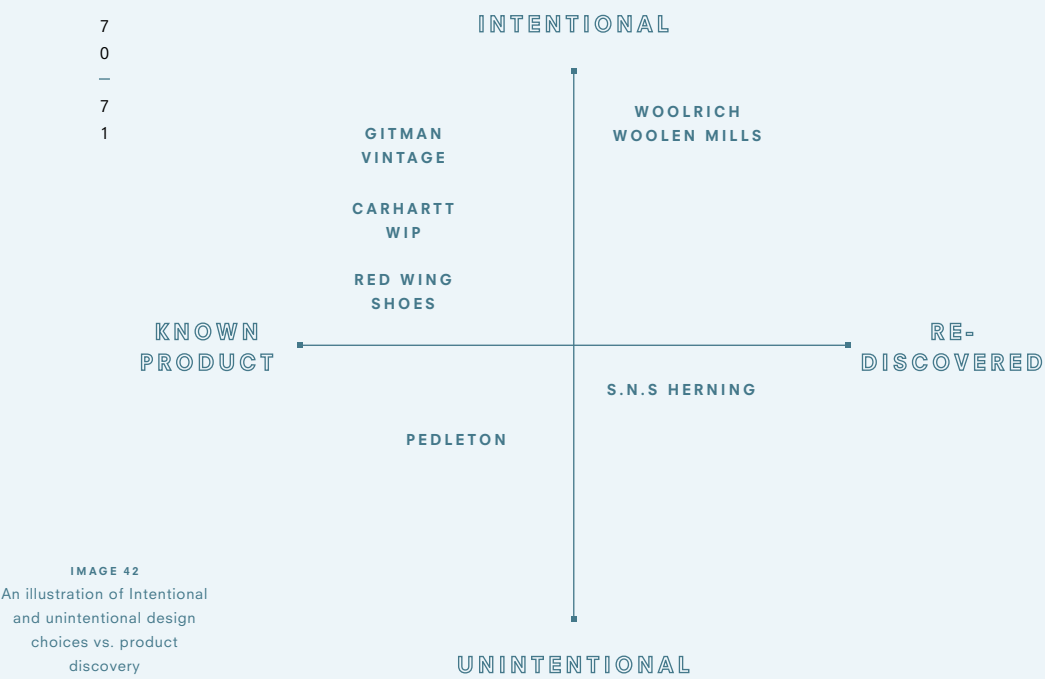
When looking at the *what they did column*, one can spot out similarities such as offering work wear that has been contemporized and made to fit into fashion category. Also, reviving company image and using archives for product development, as well as collaborating with another brand. The *why it was possible*- column on the other hand reveals that the companies all have a strong original brand styles and products that signal strong associations, such as vivid prints or other clear design features. This column also shows that once the brand took the step to collaborate or to extend into another line they were able to further advance the myth and the heritage image of their company by advertising. For example Gitman Vintage was right on time with the trend. When they began to offer button down shirts in multi-printed fabrics, it was already a starting trend in fashion and the archives were selected just on point to serve the consumer needs of that time. The table also goes to show, that with brand extensions such as Carhartt WIP it was also a question of having the right people wear the brand and further influence and promote the extension to a broader audience.



In the first illustration I look at which brands have added new products and which brands have simply moved to a new market by reviving the existing products. Brand extensions such as Carhartt WIP, WWM and Portland collection have made noticeable changes to their products and added completely new products to their range. This is understandable, because all the brands listed above are brand extensions. Some brands have also adopted a slightly new consumer base and market, probably because of their expanded product offering. In the illustration I have also added Pendleton on its own, because many of the collaborations have been done with the original Pendleton archives. The original Pendleton brand however still caters to the same market of casual wear and the changes in the original brand have mostly been inevitable updates. The collaborations have energized the original brand a lot, but what is interesting is that the original brand has remained quite untouched and actually the products that have come out of these collaborations have been seasonal or limited edition. They have surfaced from time to time almost as reminders of the Pendleton brands capabilities and existence without actually in any way hurting or molding the original brand. Another brand that has continued with only slight changes to their design is s.n.s Herning. Red wing shoes are making some redesigns of their old styles but they are still quite in tact with their original product. In fact the ‘heritage’ boots were only available in Japan till the year 2012. They have however managed to find new market and new consumers quickly via advertising and collaboration. The heritage models do not differ much from the more recent designs and it seems that therefore the Red Wing myth of durable work boots has been easy to spread.

It appears that Gitman vintage is similar to red wing boots, because their product offering is not that different from the original Gitman Bros brand. However they have also dug up the past in a successful way and portrayed the brand for a new generation that wants more from a shirt. They have managed to gain a new positioning with the trendsetters.

In the second illustration I look at styling and products. This is important, because fashion is often a lot about styling. This illustration is noteworthy because it shows that all the brands have either renewed their product or they have styled the look of the product by other means to become more contemporary. For example Red Wing shoes still make the same footwear, but they have changed the styling of the products. By styling in this case I mean advertising, overall styled looks and they way they talk about their brand on their website. Woolrich Woolen Mills has styled many of their campaigns and look books to resemble old Woorlich advertisements, but in modern way. Carhartt WIP has also invested into advertising the qualities that the original brand Carhartt is recognized for, but at the same time the styling both in looks and design has been made very contemporary. Whilst many of the case brands have repositioned themselves through advertising or design, s.n.s Herning seems to be quite comfortable in its original place. That said, the heritage fashion buzz has without doubt lifted this brand to a new level, but the effort of advertising and styling to emphasize its heritage qualities seems mild when comparing to the other brands.



A third way to look at these heritage brands is to look at whether the design solutions have been intentional or not. This is difficult to tell just by looking at images of products and advertising, but I want to include this illustration because I believe that when curating the archives, there must be some garments or styles that have not been as relevant for the brand as the collection overseer thinks. I have constructed this illustration on the thoughts of Person and Snelders (2009) on design choices. The illustration is not definite and it is merely an interpretation of how these brands appear to be positioned amongst each other. In this illustration I thought about the brands and products that they have chosen as part of their portfolio. I believe that many of these brands have selected forth the products that they believe carry the strongest brand message and have the strongest and most positive original brand associations. However, I question some of these choices by suggesting that perhaps not all products are known or remembered, or even relevant in the long run. For example they may have selected fabrics that may not be as relevant or shapes that are no longer thought to be flattering. There may also be techniques involved in the producing of these products or garments that are too difficult and could be made in an easier way. In some cases the design to fit trends or styling seems forced.



# 7

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**CASE STUDY  
COMPARISON  
WITH  
R-COLLECTION  
BRAND**

In chapter 5 I completed an online case study of recognized heritage fashion brands to help me understand some of the strategies these companies have undergone from a design and marketing perspective. In this chapter, I look into Finnish company R-collection.

R-collection adds a Finnish perspective to my thesis and I am able to compare the case study and literature review findings with a brand that is set in a Finnish context.

The case study revealed that most fashion brands use their own brand archives as design basis for the new heritage line. In this chapter I look into strategies found on the bases of the literature review and case analysis and I compare them to the renewal of the R-Collection brand. The company began to renew its image and products subtly around the time I began writing my thesis in late 2013.

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R-Collection is a known Finnish brand name and a garment manufacturer, with more than 30 years’ experience in dressing Finns. Many Finnish people remember this family owned company from their childhood and can name some of their iconic pieces. The four seasons in Finland, set the company with harsh requirements on attire and R-collection has strived to take these challenges to heart in their outdoor clothes and general products. The design of the products is quite simple, but classic. The overall design is done with paying attention to functional details and quality materials. (R-collection)

Materials are sourced and cut at R-collections own factory in Kajaani, a small town in central northern Finland. Jersey materials are woven and dyed in Finland and garments are sewn mostly in Estonia. Smaller ranges are sewn together in Finland. Design and sample production, as well as printing and embroidery are done in Finland. Down jackets and other more technical garments are produced outside of Finland due to higher costs and production capabilities. (R-collection)

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R-COLLECTION  
BRAND STORY

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PREMISES  
FOR RENEWAL

In January 2014, I interviewed the founder of R-collection Pekka Saastamoinen about the company heritage and the coming changes. I also spoke with R-collections designer about the coming renewals.<sup>5</sup> The founder of the company seemed ready to pass on his knowledge onto the next generations, but his thoughts towards the coming changes were ambivalent. As I learned from the literature review, these renewals do not happen over night and this is something that Pekka Saastamoinen has realized in his years of managing the company. The younger generation is more enthusiastic to make changes in the collections and the brand altogether. The younger generation sees the change as a positive thing. The founder of the company was a bit apprehensive about how to accomplish these changes and finding the right people to take these changes forward.

In the interview, I inquired about the brand in general. I wanted to understand the company better. I was hoping to find the heart of the brand on my visit to Kajaani. The interviewees mentioned quality and Finnish design as R-collection’s key brand elements. A surprising detail was that the company has previous experience of a line extension. R- collection had a collection in the nineties called EZ WAY that was a snow boarding inspired casual sportswear line. The company however stopped producing this line, because it was too much work for the family sized business.

At the time of the interview, R-collection had a line for men, women and children as well as a classics collection. The women and men’s collections followed some seasonal trends but none of the collections had radical changes from season to season. The most popular sold items according to R-collection staff are the anorak jacket and sweat pants. R- collection is only sold in Finland and their biggest consumer groups are situated in smaller cities.

During the interview, it became clear that the brand wishes to tap into a more youthful customer segment, but in order to do this the whole brand image would need to make changes. This is understandable since according to the interview, R- collection is most popular among middle-aged women looking for good quality basics. The company had realized the potential of the brand but did not yet have a clear image of what that new offering could be. However, since the start of my thesis the brand website was updated to a more contemporary look. During spring and summer 2014 there were plenty of campaigns on social media for engaging younger consumers. The garments were given out to brand influencers and current items such as bomber jackets were reemerged from the R-collection archives.

<sup>5</sup>When I contacted R-collection about using the company as part of my thesis, I heard they had hired a design office to help them curate their existing classics collection and edit their basic seasonal collections. The company is going through a generation change and therefore this updating of the company image has grown in importance.

IMAGE 43  
Old R-Collection  
catalogue image



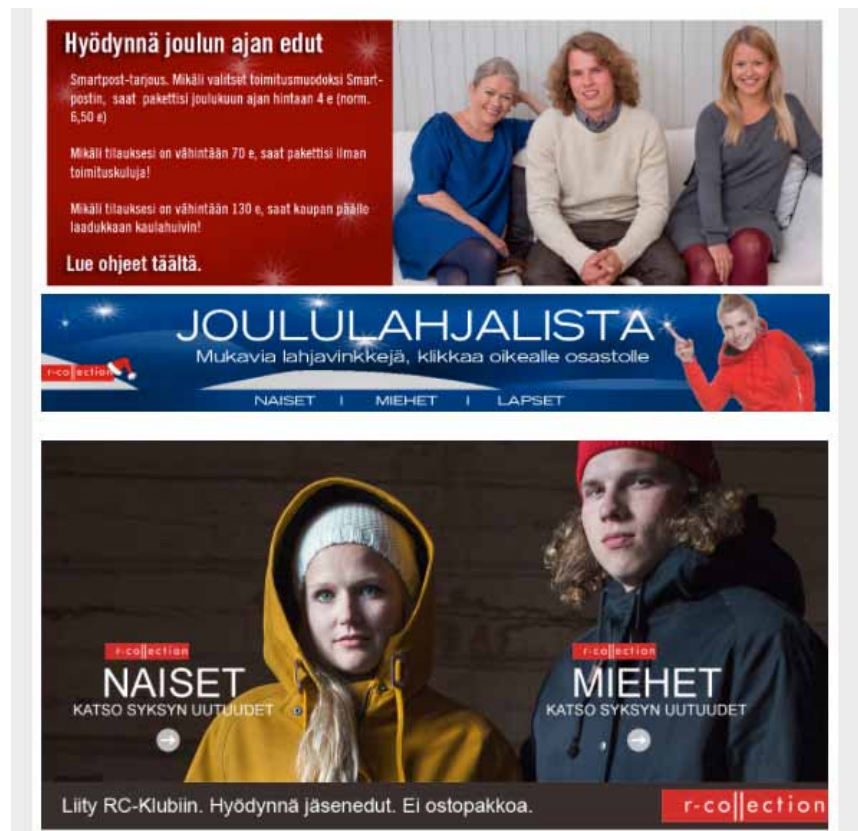


IMAGE 44  
Old website front page  
in December 2013



IMAGE 45  
Old website collections  
page in December 2013

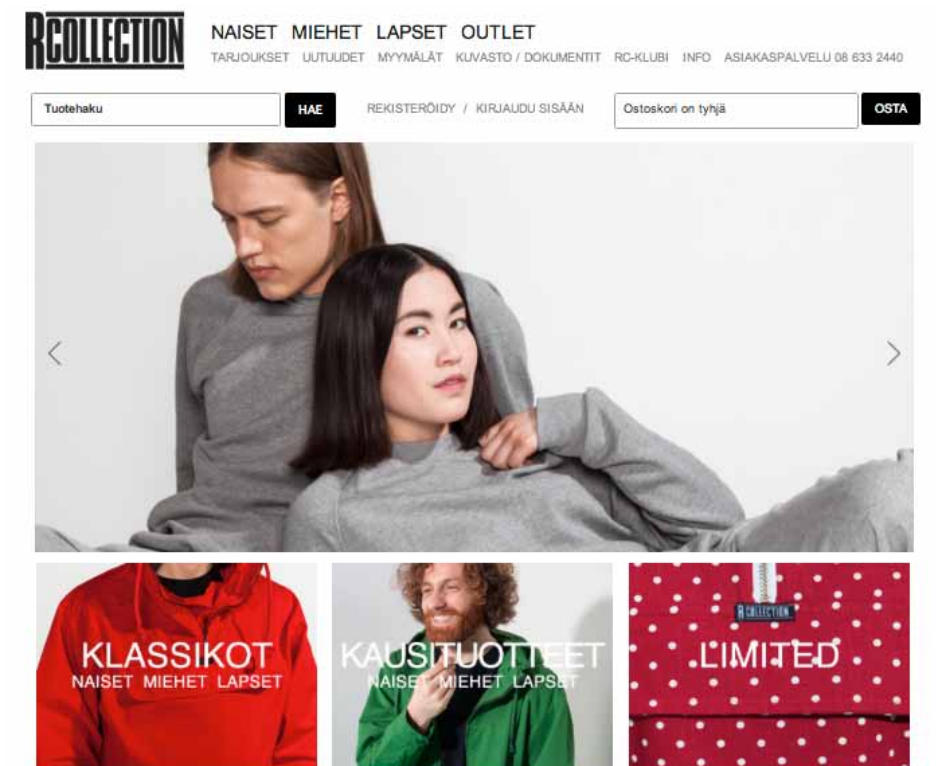


IMAGE 46  
Updated website  
front page June 2014

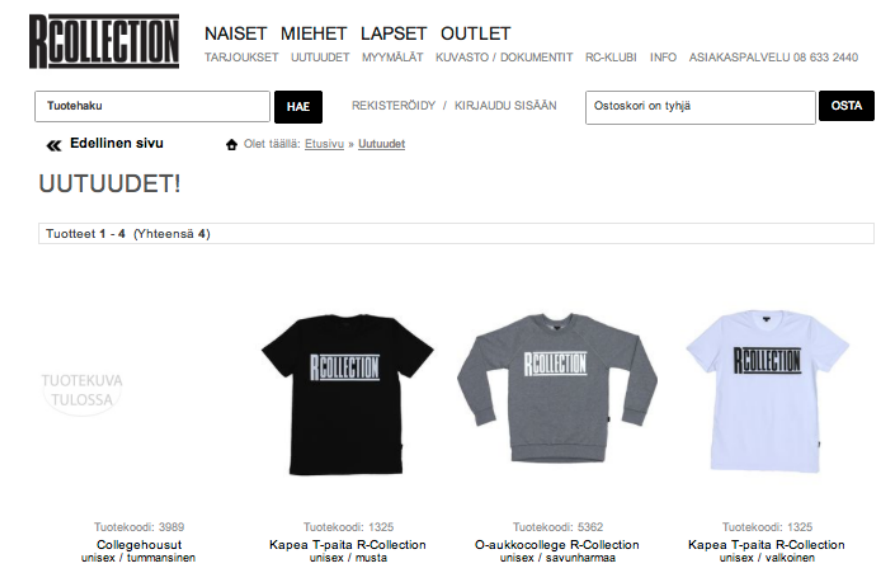


IMAGE 47  
Updated website  
"new in " June 2014



The case study brands have many similarities with the R-collection brand. Although a wider audience recognizes the case study brands, R-collection meets the basic qualifications of a heritage brand. Consequently, this chapter is a reflection of the case study findings on R-collection brand in form of heritage brand extending strategy suggestions.

The R-collection brand holds a special meaning to many consumers in Finland that lived through the anorak jacket era. However, many younger consumers do not have that emotional bond with the brand. The case study brands have had this same problem and therefore R-collection could benefit from the strategies that I came across in the case study. R-collection has already undergone some updates to the brand image. The case study findings support the notion that they should continue with different branding activities that support and emphasize their own history as a resourceful asset to their company. This should include a website with a more vivid description of the company story. The case study brands used their brand websites to build on the heritage myth and to persuade consumers of the brands significant history. In addition, most of the brands had a separate drop down menu with information about the brand history, former collaborations and other convincing details that consumers might find interesting. The updated R-collection website has categorized the classics collection separate from the basic collections. This collection could also be visible on different website altogether that could go under a “vintage” or “heritage” name. The website should also be in English.

The design of garments is very consistent with the R-collection brand. However, there could be some subtle redesigning and contemporizing. The literature review underlined the importance of design consistency. R-collection should use the recognizable casual brand style for consistency, but update and contemporize the existing collections to suit a more fashion conscious consumer base. The brand should also question whether all of the designs are still relevant. The archive findings were applied to the collections during the update, but they could also be used for designing entirely new products. The new products could be designed using the archives as basis. Highlighting some of the key features they feel embody the R-collection spirit could do this.

If the brand would like to target a consumer group favoring contemporary and more ambitious fashion, the design should be made for a more niche audience. The designers should follow emerging trends and adapt the suitable ones into the collections. This could be done with rethinking some of the designs in the collection and making more elaborate interpretations in color and material choices. However, this should only be done, if this is something they can commit to. Meaning that this kind of redesigning should be credible for the company.

The brand could also leverage the company’s excellent manufacturing facilities more creatively and be more transparent as a brand. This is understandably difficult, due to their remote location in northern Finland, but this could also be utilized as part of the myth of the brand. These kinds of details might create more meaning to their customers. Promoting activities could also be more extravagant and visible.

I believe R-collection would especially benefit from collaborations with companies that already possess qualities that they wish to achieve. In the interview it was expressed that the brand wishes to extend to a younger consumer base. By collaborating with a company that is already affiliated with young and fashionable consumers, they would be able to make this subtle transition. These collaborations could also be among unexpected collaborators to add interest and find new niche markets.

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REFLECTING	
THE LITERATURE	
REVIEW AND	
CASE STUDY	
FINDINGS ON TO	
R-COLLECTION	
BRAND	
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# 8

## 8 . PREMISES FOR IDEA COLLECTION BASED ON R-COLLECTION ARCHIVES

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My thought process with the idea collection began with defining attributes that I want to convey in my own design and by understanding the core of R-collection. Since this collection is a result of my own research work into branding strategies, I did not receive a design brief from the company.

I designed an experimental line extension for R-collection based on the brand archives, information from the literature review and case analysis. I wanted to design a small collection that could eventually expand the user base of the original brand and more importantly energize the brand. I aimed to design a collection for the future R-collection that would support the original brand, but make the brand more visible. As I learned from the case study, this kind of energizing works as advertising for the original brand and it can stimulate sales. Many brands use these futuristic concepts for market testing. This kind of design strategy can also offer premises for differentiation. Reflecting on the literature review, provoking line extensions can create energy that can substantially strengthen brand equity. The biggest challenge was to find that middle ground between my own inspiration and the archives looks. Matching original brand aesthetics was also difficult. I did not want to make the same key pieces over again, so instead I looked into what was the essence of these clothes and how they could be switched up to create more interest. In the end, I thought the cuts should be nonchalant and the silhouettes should be minimal like in many R-collection garments. In fact, if I would take away all of the color and prints splash, the garments would be simple and very commercial.



IMAGE 48  
R-collection's 90's  
catalogue pic

I began my design process by researching R-collection’s old catalogues. I did this, because I wanted go about my design in a similar way as the brands I had explored in my case study. I traveled to R-collection’s headquarters and visited the main fabric storage to get a feel for the company. I also looked at their current catalogues and more recent designs. I visited their shop in Helsinki and rampaged through flea markets in hopes of old R-collection garments.

First I researched the past collections and design features of the iconic items to get a general feel for the brand. After this I continued my research into some of the key items that I spotted in the R-collection archives. The anorak jacket was clearly a lead product in the earlier collections. I also researched 90s bomber jackets and pilot jackets, because R-collection had these garments in their catalogues during the late 80s and 90s. In addition, I looked into quilted surfaces and the use of leather in the archives. R-collection had some use of t-shirt prints and logos in the catalogues, which is why I also researched the use of logos and letters in textile printing

In the beginning of my design process, I struggled with finding a balance between the archive looks and my own design suggestions. I continued onto sketching and toiling from the initial ideas that emerged from the archives. It was demanding to frame the sketching process. I felt pressure to maintain the resemblance with the style of R-collection. The old catalogues were inspiring, but the casual look had a substantial influence on my sketching. After some time I decided to step outside the borders I had set for the design and the process became easier. Ultimately I wanted this collection to work as a concept collection in the same way as the car industry uses futuristic looks and materials to look into future trends, styling and new technologies.

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R-COLLECTION  
ARCHIVES

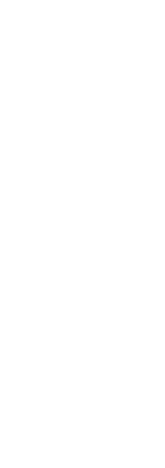


IMAGE 49  
Old R-Collection  
parka coats.

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DETECTING  
TANGIBLE  
ATTRIBUTES AND  
DESIGN FEATURES



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I wanted the idea collection to embody sportswear and casual wear. I attempted to bring back the energy and youthfulness of the older collections. The old catalogues have characteristic R-collection garments modeled by young people with innocent smiles and slightly awkward poses. Somehow those catalogue pictures embody the brand in the same way as I remember it from my own youth.

The current collections consist of sweatshirts, sweatpants, anorak jackets and every day casual wear. The same items seem to be repeated in each collection with minor changes in color and details. The look of R-collection is sporty, casual and comfortable.

The colors followed some trends, but the color scheme was very safe. It also seemed that the coloring was designed to please Finnish dressers. Therefore the colors had different earth tones and primary colors. In the 1990’s, several catalogues had garments in solid white color, which was a very clean look and gave the garments nice energy. Some of the garments from the older catalogues had print design as well, which made the simple designs more vibrant.

The fabrics in the old catalogues were very comfortable. They were perhaps chosen for functional reasons as well. After all basic wear should be easy to use and take care of. In the interview it became clear that R-collection wishes to use mostly natural fibers such as wool and cotton. The sought after natural fibers and durability may explain the scarcity of imaginative or fragile textures. Many of the items in the past collections are currently in fashion because of the 90s fashions resurfacing. For example there were several garments with quilting and prints, packable anorak jackets, sweatshirts in boxy cuts and leather detailing.

Over all, the locating of clear design features was challenging. In this phase, I thought a lot about the reasoning behind the design and why the clothes of R-collection are designed like they are designed. The process of design became scattered due to the strategies that I was trying to follow.





Finding a focus for the idea collection was difficult at first, because I was mainly looking at the R-collection archives and getting inspired by them. The case study revealed that most of the brands use the brand archives and mix them together with other sources of inspiration when developing new products. Thus, it became clear I should combine the archive inspiration with other elements. I found there to be components of sportswear in the old catalogues. I chose to further research leisurewear inspired loose cuts, the anorak jacket, and street and sportswear inclined looks. In addition, I wanted to emphasize the brand name and create a print that would celebrate the brand. I did not want to use the brand’s existing logo, but instead chose a digital print with a vague R-pattern to accentuate the brand insignia. I wanted to have a print that meant something more than just a visual. Several brands have recently energized their styles with a repeat of the brand logo or letter combination. I decided to use logo mania as one of the statements in the collection. The archives also had some use of a chenille R-letter, which inspired the R-fabric. Although the digital print was different from the original brand look, I based my decision on an insight from the case study: the new collections that are based on the original brand are often more bold, more colorful and more experimental.

After researching sportswear such as tracksuits and bomber jackets, I decided to choose R-collections quilted bomber jacket as the first design feature that I would emphasize in the collection. I was drawn to the simplicity of the shape, but I also felt it would be current and classic at the same time. The shape of the bomber jacket left room for play and inspired me to explore quilting a little further. The anorak cut was a clear choice for the second design feature for my collection. The popularity of the R-collection’s anorak jacket stems from the 90’s and I have a personal memory of these jackets. The R-collection archives and the current collections have the anorak jacket, which is why it was important to include this style in the idea collection. Anorak as a garment is intriguing, because I firstly associate it with childhood memories of R-collection and then with mountaineers and cyclists. The anoraks designed for mountaineering are often made from waxed cotton or lightweight technical materials, but R-collection’s anoraks I remember best in simple cotton. However, I think the anorak cut works in many different fabrics and different fabrics give the anorak jacket new connotations. Third feature that I wanted to have in the idea collection were comfortable pants. R-collection sweatpants are a recognized item in the collections from season to season. I wanted to create that same look, but with different materials and usage occasions. Therefore, I chose to design all the bottoms for the collection as loose and relaxed as possible. I also wanted to emphasize the silhouettes as wide legged and oversized.

The idea behind the idea collection was to see what features would be needed in order to have positive brand associations and how far I could take the product design from the original brand for the garments to still possess some similarities. A good comparison of this collection would be to look at this through Stewart and Martins (2001) measures of product similarity. Much like in the table about Gitman shirts, this collection is still having feature-based similarities in the silhouettes, but the fabrics are more colorful and unconventional. The usage occasion has perhaps changed, but this is also a question of taste. The fit and the fabrics are still suitable for daywear, but it is probable that the prints and colors in the idea collection alter the usage occasion. The brand schema and concept consistencies have also changed a bit. R-collection brand has a strong casual feel and although the cuts in the idea collection are quite functional the fabric choices make them inconsistent with R-collection garments. The goal-based similarity of the idea collection and the R-collection brand is perceptible in products that have been derived from the anorak jacket. In other words if one wanted to wear an anorak jacket one could do that, but in different styles. Therefore the idea collection and the r-collection brand do share some of the same connotation associations.

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DESIGN  
CHOICES AND  
INSPIRATION

IMAGE 50  
Collection silhouettes

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4  
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IMAGE 51  
R-pattern (Helmi Liikanen)





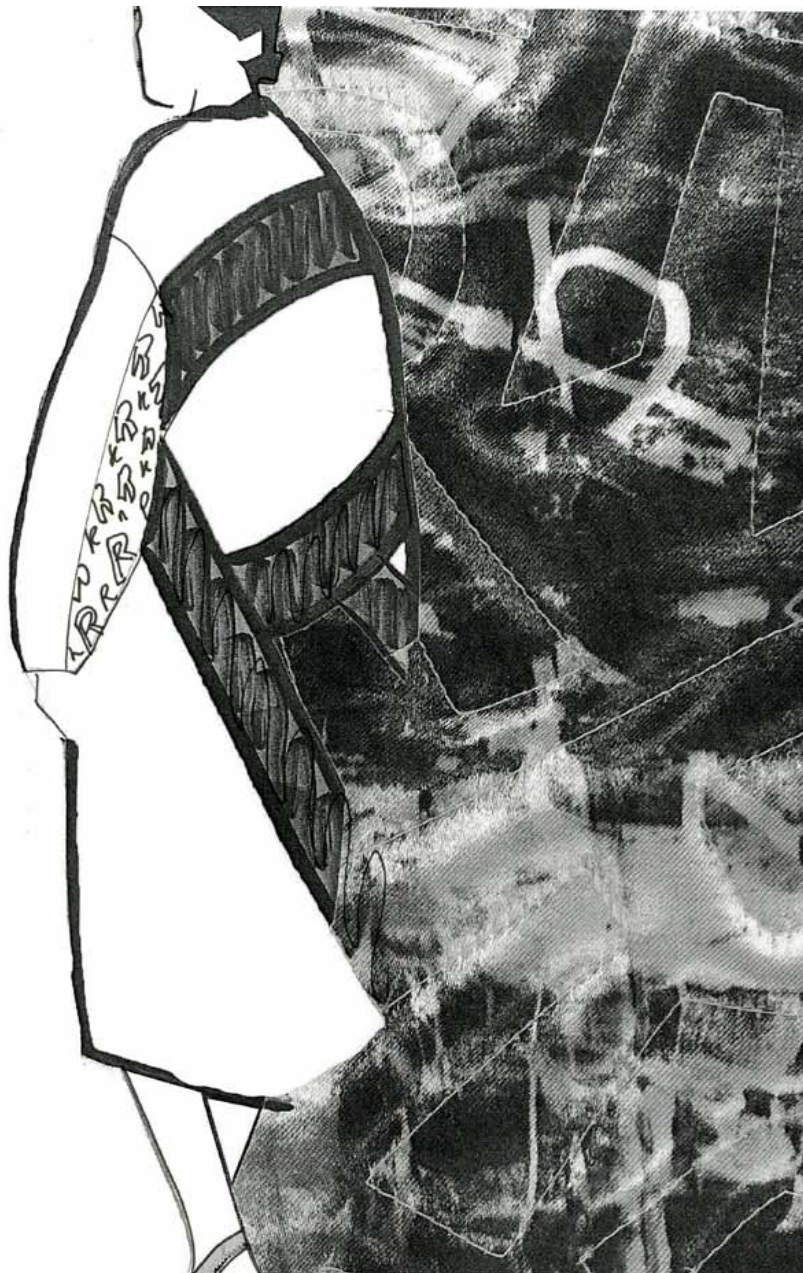


IMAGE 52  
Sketch detail 1

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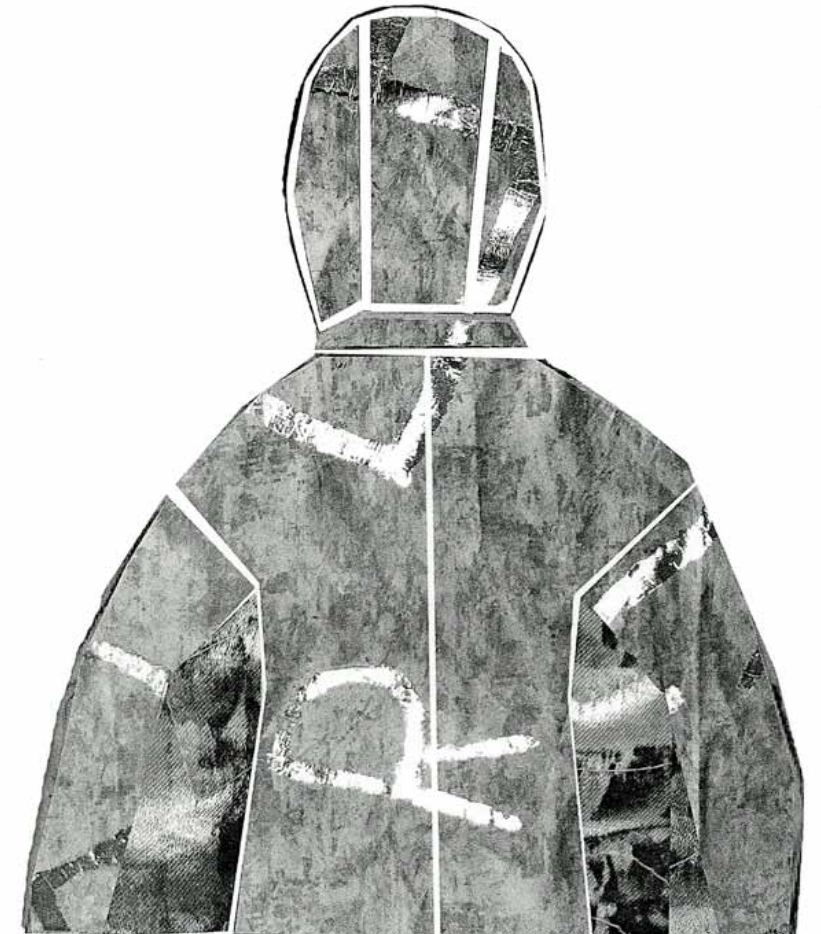


IMAGE 53  
Sketch detail 2

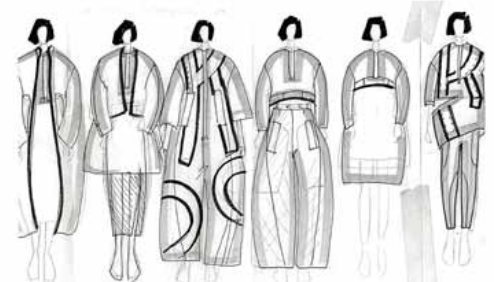
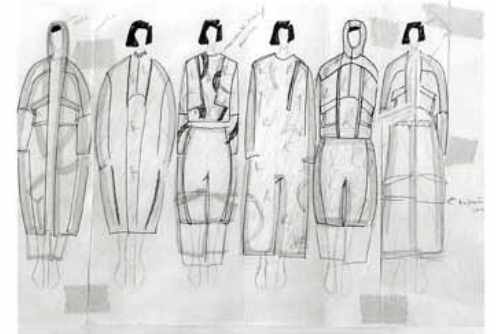


IMAGE 54  
Sketch detail 3





IMAGE 55  
R-pattern details



8  
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IMAGE 56  
Design process  
detail



IMAGE 57  
Toiling detail





IMAGE 58  
A vintage take on  
logomania. A constellation  
by Designer Rudi Gernreich

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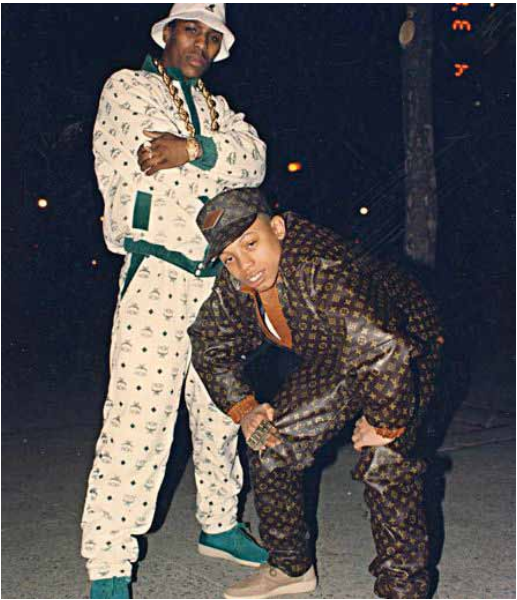


IMAGE 60  
Dapper Dan's  
Hip Hop take  
on logomania



IMAGE 59  
Rudi Gernreich logomania



IMAGE 61  
DKNY SS14 take on  
logomania



IMAGE 62  
Inuit anorak



IMAGE 63  
R-collection  
bag-anoraks



IMAGE 64  
Vintage  
army anorak



IMAGE 65  
Anorak  
by LL.Bean



IMAGE 66  
Vogue 1950s  
anorak patterns  
9  
2  
—  
9  
3



IMAGE 67  
Vintage denim  
anorak



IMAGE 68  
Mountaineers in Anoraks



IMAGE 69  
Vintage army overall  
with anorak cuts



The archives of R-collection and their brand mood of sporty and comfortable mainly affected my material and color choices for the collection. I chose the digitally printed viscose satin because the look and feel of the fabric reminded me of 90's track pant jersey. However the material is finer quality, which I felt would add character to the garment. I also used cotton satin, because cotton seemed to be the most frequently used fabric in the R-collection's collections. In addition, I chose padding to emphasize the silhouettes and to make the R-letter quilting pop out. The old catalogues had a few anoraks made out of leather, which is why I wanted to incorporate reindeer leather in a cool white color in the collection. The white color reminded me of the white anoraks and raincoats in the R-collection archives. I used the R-letter throughout the collection and in addition I played with the R-letter in some foil prints of black and silver.

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MATERIALS  
AND  
COLORS



IMAGE 71  
Leather detail



IMAGE 72  
Viscose satin detail



IMAGE 70  
Jeffrey Beene's sequin  
football gowns

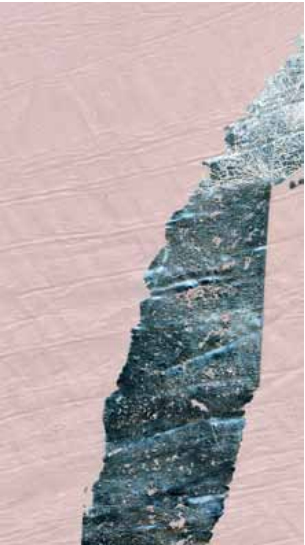


IMAGE 73  
Foil printing detail



IMAGE 74  
Quilting detail

8  
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4

THE  
COLLECTION

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The immediate goal of my thesis was to explore the branding and design strategies of heritage fashion brands. A profounder goal was to see if there were differences between the existing literature and the case study findings. When I began to explore the different aspects related to my thesis I found the more I searched the more I wanted to know. This thesis revealed several new domains of interest and it increased my curiosity towards branding. The most interesting insights of my thesis were related to how significant the bond of design and branding is. I realized that most of the brands I feel some intangible appeal towards have mastered this interrelation.

I feel the most challenging part of my thesis was the designing of the idea collection. Although it was based on my own findings and there was no design brief, I struggled with turning the results into something concrete. During the design process I learned a lot about myself as a designer. I noticed that my decision-making is at times controlled by my need for endless iteration. I also learned, that I need to be more confident with my own ideas. The collection I produced is not ideal, because I feel that if it were more down to earth the brand associations with R-collection would be stronger. However, it is what I set out to do and I think it is in the requirements of an idea collection. It also meets the requirements of futuristic concept that R-collection could use for market testing. Looking back at my design process, I feel I should have framed my design references better. I realize now that one strong design feature of the R-collection brand is the color range. Therefore using that color range might have adduced more brand associations with the original brand. The heritage collections in the case study had also emphasized the heritage look, which on one hand comes naturally to these brands due to the archives, but then again it is in a way a styling that these brands use for garments that are “heritage”. In the end, I was able to use the selected design features in the collection and match the brands youthful and care free aesthetics.

Most of the previous research emphasized strategic approach on how to manage the visual identity of a brand or a product from another design field than fashion. The heritage brands that I looked into shed some light to how fashion brands manage these things. However, it would be interesting to explore these strategies further with different kinds of fashion companies. To continue in the steps of brand renewals, it might be noteworthy to further explore how high fashion companies update brand concepts and keep consistency with the original brand. In addition, it might be interesting to study the management of design with fashion labels, because the design processes seem to vary from other fields of design. One of the most intriguing subjects in my thesis was the concept of intentional and unintentional design choices. Therefore, a future area of research could dispute some of the design choices of well-known fashion brands and their iconic looks by suggesting that perhaps not all products are consistent with the rest of the brand or even relevant to the brand.

In the light of this thesis, it might be interesting to further study how my collection would be perceived by R-collection customers and people with previous perceptions about the brand. Not to mention analyzing the effects advertising and branding activities would have on these perceptions.



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73. Jenni Simanainen 2014 Foil printing detail

74. Jenni Simanainen 2014 quilting detail

## COLLECTION

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